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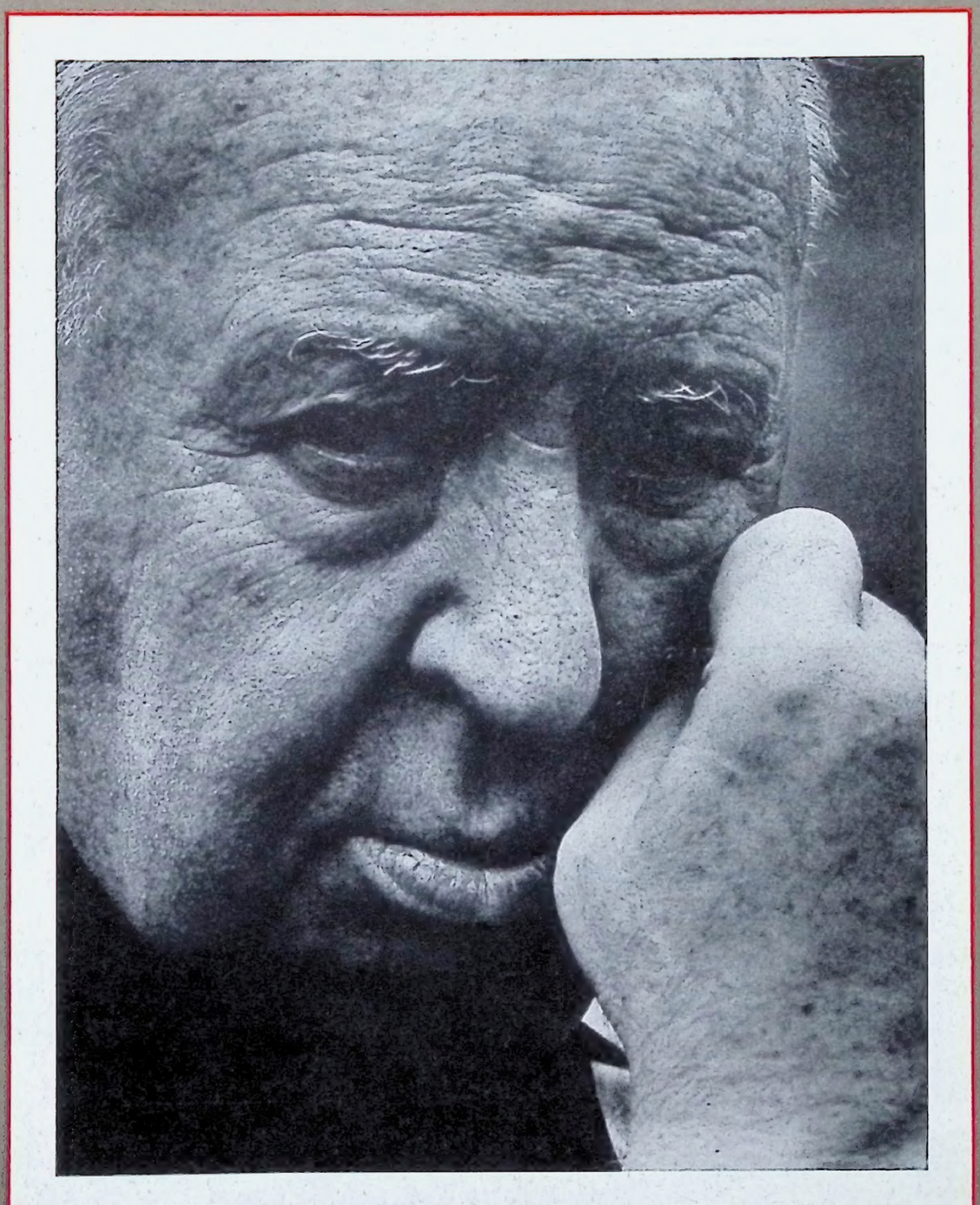
TAKE ONE

Alfred Hitchcock: A Friendly Salute



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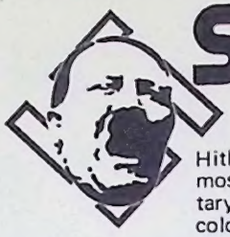

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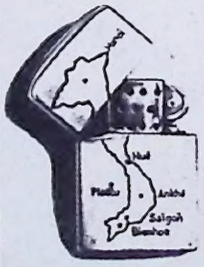

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The News Page

The truth 24 times per second.

ANN WORDSWORTHE

We like printing photos like this because we can mention a lot of different things. The above photograph — for instance — plugs four (4) things: It was taken on the set the first day of shooting of the hour-long CBC drama tentatively-titled (1) *Ada*, which was also the birthday of the director of the play, Claude Jutra (that's him on the far right). Jutra was presented with a birthday cake by (far left) Jerry Jackson and (next to him) Craig Bernhardt, both directors of The University of Iowa's immensely successful and prestigious (2) "Refocus" Film Festival (held this April 16th through the 25th). Jutra and fellow-Canadian-director Don Shebib (that's him passing on a piece of the cake to Jutra) were both among the guests of honour at this year's Festival, which included American premiers of both Shebib's new film (3) *Second Wind*, and Jutra's recent (4) *For Better or for Worse*.

Perhaps one reason that Universal agreed to step back and let Paramount have **King Kong** all to itself is that the two companies are partners in CIC, which handles distribution of their films outside of North America. If **Kong** makes $30 million in rentals abroad (not impossible) and CIC gets 40 percent of that, that means a net of $12-million that Universal (without having spent a cent) shares with Paramount. (And JOSEPH SARGENT, who was to have directed the Universal version, isn't unhappy either: His contract gave him a fat salary for one-and-a-half-years whether the film was made or not.)

Little Notes: STEVEN SPIELBERG's next film (after **Close Encounters of the Third Kind**, now retitled **Watch the Skies**) will doubtless be based on a screenplay he's developing with JOHN MILIUS about a used car salesman. ... STÉPHANE AUDRAN and CLAUDE CHABROL — husband and wife in real (as it were) life — are together again. He is directing her in **Folies bourgeoises**. ... *American Hairdresser* magazine reports that Continental Hair Products have presented hand-painted, personalized Conair hair dryers to — among others — WARREN BEATTY and SOPHIA LOREN. ... ISABELLE ADJANI will star for ROGER CORMAN in his **La Grande Suzanne**, about tennis champ SUZANNE LENGLEN. ... Afghanistan has barred HUSTON's **The Man Who Would be King** for making the natives of that country appear "overly primitive". ... **Last Tango** director BERNARDO BERTOLUCCI, its producer (ALBERTO GRIMALDI) and distributor (UA head LEE KAMERN) have all been sentenced to two months in jail for pornography. ... MILOS FORMAN is currently filming **Someone Is Killing the Great Chefs of Europe** (a comedy-mystery), then he comes back to the States to shoot **Las Vegas Gamble**. ... JAMES BRIDGES is to write and direct **9/30/55**, about hero worship and the effects of the death of JAMES DEAN on eight 1955 college freshmen. ... SYDNEY POLLACK is to start shooting in Paris on **Deerfield**, an adaptation of the ERICH MARIA REMARQUE novel, *Heaven Has No Favorites*. Then POLLACK is to produce and direct **Victory**, based on the novel by JOSEPH CONRAD. ... April sees the start of filming, mainly in Italy, of **Le Commandatore**. CLAUDE PINOTEAU directs YVES MONTAND in this comedy. ... SIDNEY LUMET has signed to direct the screen version of the successful Broadway play **Equus**. ... ROBERT ALDRICH is directing BURT LANCASTER, LINO VENTURA, PAUL WINFIELD and ART CARNEY in **Silo Three**. ... ROMAN POLANSKI is to stage *Rigoletto* this season at the Bavarian State Opera House. ... June 1 has been announced as the start-date for **Sextette**, which will star (it says here) MAE WEST. ... Animator RALPH BAKSHI is set to bring to the screen (for MGM) **The Lord of the Rings**.

Attention Guinness, Editorial Director JOE MEDJUCK claims to have set some sort of record, having gotten wrong the titles of no less than 20 percent of the films on his 1975 Ten-Best List (see last issue). DAVID CRONENBERG's film, which was originally called **Orgy of the Blood Parasites** and then **The Parasite Murders**, is now called **Shivers** in Canada and **They Came from Within** in the US. The correct title of MICHAEL SNOW's film is **Rameau's Nephew by Diderot (Thanx to Dennis Young) by Wilma Schoen**. Medjuck has been releived of all profo-reading duties at *Tkae One*.

Incarcerated #2

Second in a (we hope) short series of reports on filmmakers currently in prisons (for political offenses) around the world. Prepared with the assistance of Amnesty International (53 Theobald's Road, London WC1X 8SP).

Lazar Stojanovic, Yugoslavia

Lazar Stojanovic, aged 31, is a film director who was arrested while in the army and charged with "a criminal act of hostile propaganda" based on a film **Plastic Jesus**, which he had made as part of his diploma thesis while at film school in 1971, and for which he was awarded the highest mark given by the examination board. As a result of the official criticism of **Plastic Jesus**, Professor Alexander Petrovic, Stojanovic's teacher at the film school and a well-known film director, was forced to condemn the film publicly. A few months later he was expelled from the Communist Party and lost his teaching post. **Plastic Jesus** was also criticized by the League of Communists of Yugoslavia for Theatre, Radio and Television in their statement of 19.1.1973: "This film not only attacks our social system in an especially crude manner and offends the personality of Comrade Tito but also gives the same value to socialism and fascism. The film contains an expressly anti-humanist message, negating basic moral values. ..."

Lazar Stojanovic was tried in June 1973 by the Belgrade District Court, when he was already serving a one-year sentence for "disparaging political remarks" made during his national service. Both the sentences were combined into one, totalling 2 years' rigorous imprisonment. On 18.12.1973, Mr. Stojanovic was tried for a second time by the Serbian Supreme Court which increased his sentence to 3 years' rigorous imprisonment on the grounds that he had committed a criminal act of hostile propaganda in his film which "maliciously and untruthfully portrayed socio-political circumstances in our country..." Lazar Stojanovic is detained in Pozarevac Prison.

LETTERS

All the wrong reasons

I was very interested, after finally getting the first issue of a subscription a friend bought me for Christmas late in March, to read Michael Goodwin's 10 Best of 75 list. Now, I respect Goodwin — not only is he a persuasive (eloquent when apposite fails) writer, but his iconoclasm and anti-taste often runs off in the same direction as mine (e.g., I liked **Myra Breckinridge** too). But. **The Texas Chainsaw Massacre**. Now this is a movie that, I believe, premiered in the Midwest — I first saw it in Royal Oak, Michigan in late 74. Everybody in my house (4 plus me) went down to see it, hoping for some good amoral gore. We were disappointed, and not because of the blood count. Because it was simple shit. It had that peculiar effect of many bad exploitation or "underground" (ref.: **Pink Flamingos**) movies — utterly boring to watch (sit through), leaving you with a walkout sensation of flat distaste (as in *feh*...) but somehow, through some curious process, *after* you've gotten away from it, *later* when you tell people about it... it becomes amusing on its own stupid level (ref.: Warhol/Morrissey films in general). I was amazed when I saw that it was being exhibited at the Museum of Modern Art, and later, at whoever was responsible for that ridiculous yet probably accurate quote about going to see **Texas Chainsaw** at midnight being some sort of nouveau public ritual (but by what public?). If this really is the cult film that it seems to be, then that can only say how low the stock of cult films as a form or even a sociological barometer has dropped. In other words, a movie is only as good as its audience, and they keep bringing **Chainsaw** back to the local erstwhile art house which now specialises in an endless diet of things like **Rainbow Bridge** and Neil Young's **Journey Through the Past**. (I ran into the owner of this joint in a pizza place one night, and asked him why they consistently ran this shit when you used to be able to go there and see Truffaut and Tod Browning. "Because **Easy Rider** is the only thing that makes any money," he said.) In my opinion **Texas Chainsaw** is so crappy that it would not even be worth talking about at this length had it not gotten so much attention, especially from people deploring it, who are even stupider than its fans because they only add to the ranks of people who wasted their money on it. I imagine the same is true of **Snuff**, although I won't go see it. The Detroit *Free Press* had the best, most effective review of **Snuff** I've seen: they told people that when the girl's hand gets chopped off, you can see sawdust falling out of the dummy (no puns) employed. I think **Texas Chainsaw** could have been disposed of in much the same way if all the early reviews had merely mentioned that the last *third* of the film consists entirely of a guy in a mask chasing a teenage girl, whose screams provide a nice counterpart to the endless *rarrrrrr* of the saw if not quite as convincing, and that *when she slows down, so does he*.

But **The Texas Chainsaw Massacre** being listed as one of the year's best didn't bother me half as much as... **The Wind and the Lion**??????!!! I mean: ???????? ??!!!!!!!!!! (Strangled expressions of negative amazement.) The fact that this inclusion was *not* inspired by nihilism is perhaps the worst thing that can be said; other than that words all but fail. I mean, you, editor, whoever you are, have you actually *seen* this movie? I mean, I know Goodwin fell for **Performance**, which grows more hilarious with age, and **Trash** which did have its moments between the airless voids, but **The Wind and the Lion** was so idiotic it became a bit endearing thereby, like a really good made-for-TV movie, and like made-for-TV movies it can only be enjoyed by anyone over the age of 7 for its camp appeal. I mean to say I liked it, but for all the wrong reasons; because I am a connoisseur of elaborate stupidity. The highlights of my viewing of **The Wind and the Lion** were provided by the middle-aged couple sitting behind me and my girlfriend: the woman kept saying "Oh Christ, don't you want to go yet?" and the guy would say "I dunno, but I think they musta got the plot out of the phone book." It was not just that this flick was totally unbelievable (I am glad that I have met Goodwin, know how intelligent he is and thus do not have to speculate that his sense of radical politics and sensitivity to feminism might have been excited by the closing sequence, where Candice Bergen and her children pick up guns and hold off an entire British regiment while Sean Connery escapes, which provoked certain scattered elements of the audience to *laugh out loud* in the theatre), nor that Brian Keith as Teddy Roosevelt was almost good enough to compete as a sheer *move* in the politics of insensitivity with James Brolin as Gable, nor that Connery (who is building a proper English potgut) as a Bedouin chieftain was so pompously false he was appealing. The thing that is truly distressing about Goodwin's statements on this film, which are not even worth refuting, is that you know he's entirely sincere. I can only await, with an eagerness tinged with the prurient, his best of 76 list; and if **Lucky Lady** doesn't turn up on it, I want you to know that I will feel not only disappointed, but may be forced into speculations the boy might be taking payola. In other words, I'm a Goodwin fan, but, as with **Texas Chainsaw** (which actually made both my Ten Best and Ten Worst lists for 74) and **Wind and the Lion**, I'm beginning to suspect that I admire him for all the wrong reasons.

Best regards on a fine magazine,

Lester Bangs
Birmingham, Mich.

P.S. **Barry Lyndon** is the true porn.

Erratum

I am very happy that Michael Goodwin selected our film, **Just Before Nightfall**, as one of his ten best of 1975.

Alas, in your Booker's Guide, you give the distributor as Swank rather than Kino.

Could you please have this corrected in the next issue, with the distributor listed as Kino International Corp., 119 W. Colorado Avenue, Telluride, Co. 81435.

Thanks for your help.

John Tilley
Kino International
New York City

Stooges info?

For my study of the films and lives of the Three Stooges I would be grateful to any of your readers that could supply me with stills, papers, memoirs, films and/or sources of this information. Also similar information on The Hollywood Cartoon.

Jay Mann
10 Grant St. Apt 4
Clarion, Pa 16214

Truffaut translator talks!

Dear Joe Blades,

I've just bought the latest issue of *Take One* (the one with James Coburn on the cover). I've always enjoyed *Take One*, but this issue particularly pleased me, for a very selfish reason. For, on page 46, while reviewing Grove Press's edition of Truffaut's *Day for Night*, you not only praised the look of the book, but also added: "The script is translated by Sam Flores, whose homework is really solid: not only does Flores render an acute, line-by-line translation (often at variance with the movie's U.S. subtitled version), he provides, in addition, historical, biographical, and behind-the-scenes data." (I didn't mind typing out all that here... it's too pleasing to my ego!)

For this relief, much thanks!

You're a writer yourself, and you know how badly paid we are, and how little praise we get... so you must understand quite well how good I felt about that!

Incidentally, the idea of annotating the script was completely mine. Seghers furnished us at Grove with merely the shooting script, nothing more. And Warners had no intention of letting me view a print again and again to check various points. But, luckily, the film had just come out when I got this translating assignment; and so I went every day for two weeks to see the film and then checked what I had seen against the French script I'd been given. I got no encouragement for what I was doing either from France or from my publishers here. Indeed, at times I wondered if they thought I was merely cluttering up the pages with unnecessary information! That's why the responses I've been getting recently have been so pleasing. Quite a few people who bought the book have written to Grove praising the notes. (One man even submitted a couple of questions which I can't answer about the film, and which I have to write Truffaut about.)

Anyway, yours was one of the kindest of all reviews, and I'm grateful. It makes me feel that all the work was worth it. But I still say: fuck Warners!

Sam Flores
New York City

We welcome letters from our readers but can seldom accommodate lengths of over 500 words. The editors assume that any letter received (unless otherwise stated) is free for publication.

The Cinema and its Double: Alfred Hitchcock

by James Monaco

"That's funny."
"What?"
"That plane's dustin' crops where there ain't no crops!"

Hitch in 1926.

Like the scene in which they occur, these last perfunctory lines of dialogue from the extraordinary cornfield sequence of **North by Northwest** can serve as an emblem for the special qualities that have made Alfred Hitchcock one of the undisputed masters of an art that was born only three years before he was. After delivering himself of this laconic yet portentous observation, the farmer boards a bus and heads on down the long straight road that bisects the scene, eventually disappearing in the dust of the hot afternoon. Roger O. Thornhill ("What does the 'O' stand for?" "Nothing.") is left alone with the spectre of his fictional double, "George Kaplan," in the heart of the heart of the country.

With classic Hitchcockian irony, the farmer has revealed to us the single false detail in a scene that otherwise appears in perfect order. The mood of impatient languor and ennui that has been so carefully established in the scene shifts abruptly as we and Thornhill are thrown into a nightmare of isolation, from which there seems to be no escape. All the elements of Hitchcock's cinema are here: the droll wit which pervades all of his best films and which Cary Grant's Thornhill so eloquently evinces; the fundamental grounding in anxiety, an emotion which is at the same time cosmic and personal; the implication that this fear has a political dimension — that is, that it has its source outside ourselves; the objective insistence of the mise-en-scène which demands that we view Thornhill (like all Hitchcock's best characters) as an integral part of his physical environment; and, finally, the sheer tour de force of it all: the scene is the superb result of composition and montage, so much so that even its author has noted that, at least in narrative terms, it is essentially gratuitous. It works for psychological and structural reasons, not be-

James Monaco, Take One's Associate Editor, is the author of The New Wave: Truffaut, Godard, Chabrol, Rohmer, Rivette, *recently published by Oxford University Press, and of the forthcoming* How to Read a Film *(also Oxford).*

More than anyone else of his generation, Alfred Hitchcock has been responsible for discovering how the root logic of cinema works.

cause it helps to "tell a story."

Pure Hitchcock then. Pure cinema. More than anyone else of his generation Alfred Hitchcock has been responsible for discovering how the root logic of cinema works: how craft reveals intelligence, how film relates to us, reflects us, describes us best: not as narrative, not as image, but as a *tertium quid* which for the first time welds those two ancient artistic modes together. A prodigious achievement, certainly. Yet, as François Truffaut suggests elsewhere in this issue, Hitchcock has not been especially well-served by the public persona he himself has projected over the years. It is, maybe, too easy for us to take for granted that cynical, portly entertainer with the vaguely lugubrious sense of humor. A master craftsman? Yes, we grant that now. But a filmmaker of rare intelligence? Well, wasn't it Hitchcock himself who, when confronted with an actress who seemed to be taking things too seriously, protested: "Ah, it's only a movie, Ingrid!"

Hitch some 40 years later.

Yet if we ignore his deprecatory self-caricature signature, Alfred Hitchcock is seen as the author of an extraordinary body of work. On August 13th of this year he will celebrate his 77th birthday. During a career that began in 1921 and has spanned 55 years, he has completed 53 feature-length films. No other filmmaker in the history of cinema has had such a lengthy career. Indeed, Hitchcock's life in film is so extensive that it might be useful to consider him as having had not one but four careers: there is the silent Hitchcock (9 films); the British Hitchcock of the thirties (14 films); the American Hitchcock of the black-and-white period (15 films between 1940 and 1952); and finally the color Hitchcock (15 films from 1953 to the present). A director whose career began in the days of Griffith and Chaplin, Stroheim and Murnau, is now half a century later still producing relevant, exciting films whose popularity is undiminished and whose critical reputation has, in fact, increased markedly. What can account for this singular phenomenon?

It's begging the question simply to reply that "the master of suspense" entertains us well. *Why* do we find the mood of his films so powerful? Clearly, Hitchcock has tapped a deep vein of primal emotion in his audiences. In fact, he is the existential poet of the cinema *par excellence,* and his extensive gallery of haunted, hunted men and women suffer for us all, victims of the age of anxiety. Like Kafka, Poe and Dostoevsky before him, Hitchcock is intent on working out the logic of this fearsome dilemma. Unlike his literary predecessors, however, he does so with wit and humour. The result is that his cinema comes close to providing something very much like catharsis for the large audiences it attracts. Simply because it is popular rather than elite art it is a more direct and intense description of the situation in which we find ourselves. Most important, the irony with which Hitchcock suffuses his best films provides us with a useful weapon with which to express our anger. Bob and Jill Lawrence, Richard Hannay and Pamela, Elsie Carrington and Richard Ashenden, Sylvia Verloc, Robert Tisdall and Erica, Iris Henderson and Miss Froy, Jonny Jones, Lina Mackinlaw, Barry Kane and Patricia Martin, Charlie Newton, John Ballantine and Dr. Constance Peterson, Alicia Huberman and Devlin, Margot Wendice and Mark Halliday, L.B. Jeffries and Lisa Fremont, John Robie and Frances Stevens, Ben and Jo MacKenna, Manny Balestrero, Scottie Ferguson, Roger Thornhill, Milton Arbogast, Melanie Daniels and Annie Hayworth, Marnie Edgar and Mark Rutland, Michael Armstrong

and Sarah Sherman — all of them have felt for us the searing chill that comes with realizing that, metaphorically, "that plane's dustin' crops where there ain't no crops." Most of them have met the challenge and survived, stronger for the experience.

It's easy to see why much of the best criticism of Hitchcock's work sees his films as essentially religious. As Rohmer and Chabrol described it in their landmark 1957 study, Hitchcock's oeuvre is an intricate web of transferences and reversals of guilt and responsibility: a system of exchanges. No doubt these are the elements of a religious universe, but they are just as easily seen as elements of a dramatic system. And since the one thing needfull for a religious interpretation — a higher authority — is nearly always conspicuous by its absence in a Hitchcock film, maybe it would be best to treat them as dramatic constructions rather than Catholic parables.

These two interpretations are not so diverse as they may at first seem. Since the Greeks, drama has had a more or less religious function and it may just be true that the genre Hitchcock invented fifty years ago ("thriller" and "suspense film" are such dead labels — what can we call it except "the Hitchcock film"?) comes as close as any model we now have to reproducing the effects of ancient tragedy. Hitchcock films are *not* tragedies (although such films as **The Wrong Man** do come close), but the two forms share certain basic elements: reversal and revelation, pity and fear which lead to a psychological experience best termed catharsis; and they both share a grounding in ritual. Not to make too much of this, but the Hitchcock film has demonstrated how the communal celebration of movies can have a psychologically beneficient — yes, even religious — effect.

More important perhaps is a dimension of Hitchcock's work which is not often spoken of but which is, I think, nevertheless an important element of his success. He has devised for his characters a response to disorder and oppression which is political. Hitchcock never speaks of his films this way (indeed, in interviews he often takes pains to minimalize the significance of politics in his movies) but how else to explain the dichotomy he constructs between the hunter and the hunted?

At least seventeen of his films make direct use of political materials. Moreover, the great majority of his movies share a deep-rooted spirit of revolt. Maybe this really does stem, as he suggests, from his experience of being locked in a cell as a "lesson" as a child. Whatever the genesis of the obsession, the fact is that he has given us dozens of elegantly wrought models of response to oppression. In Hitchcock's world, we are all "wrong men", reacting to the false doubles others create of us.

As personal statements, Hitchcock's films are essays in anxiety; as social documents, they state the terms of the calculus of power which is the political root of our experience of anxiety. But there is a third dimension to the Hitchcockian thriller, as well, one which gives depth to the basic psycho-political framework: his craft. This isn't just a matter of masterful technique; it is more a question of the ethics of the relationship between filmmaker and viewer, and it is possibly the primary reason we react so strongly to Hitchcock's cinema: because he is speaking, with care, directly to us. Unlike the bulk of his imitators and epigones he does not just manipulate his audience, he *converses* with us. This is the relationship he explored in **Rear Window**, a dialectic whose terms are observer and observed, active and passive, artist and subject. A few years later **Vertigo** provided the best exposition of the psychology of anxiety, phrased in Hitchcock's favorite symptom. This was followed immediately by **North by Northwest**, which Hitchcock considers his most representative American film (and maybe his best), which described with a perspicuity we weren't to realize fully until a decade later, the political landscape against which the anxiety is set.

These three films triangulate Hitchcock's art,* a world unique for its integrity and unity as well as for its paradox and longevity.

In an often-quoted remark, Hitchcock put it best:

> I'm like, let's say, a painter who paints flowers. It's the method of treating things that interests me. But on the other hand, if I were a painter, I would say: "I can't paint anything that doesn't contain a message."

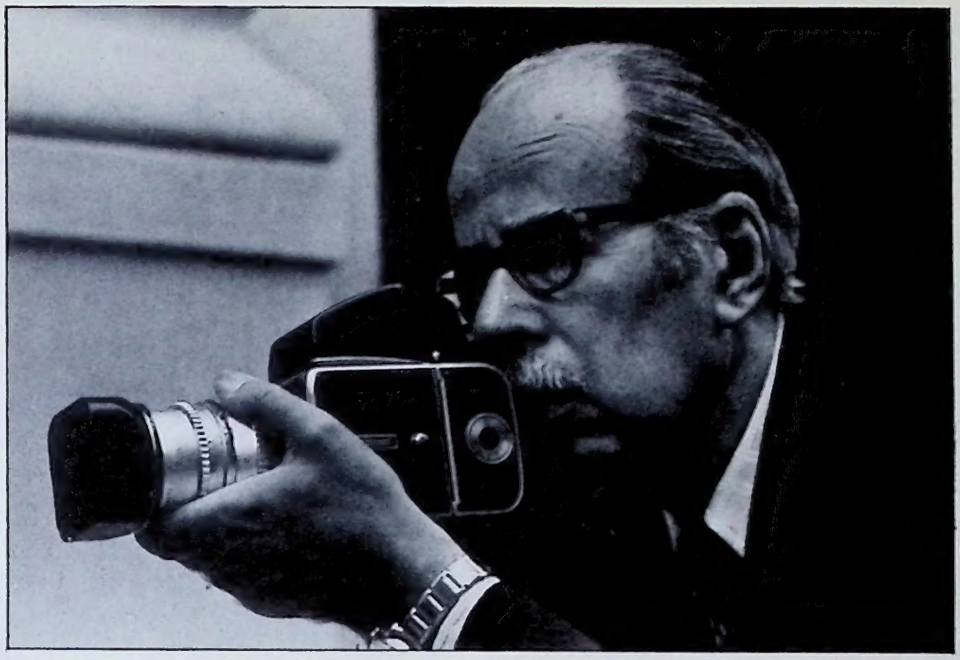
Method and message, that's the remarkable conflation that makes Alfred Joseph Hitchcock one of the greatest directors of the first century of film.

*If we add **The Wrong Man**, made just before **Vertigo**, and a much underrated film, then we have a model for not only the religious dimension but the realistic, as well.

Philippe Halsman on

Shooting Hitchcock

Philippe Halsman, the internationally-famed portrait photographer, first met Alfred Hitchcock on assignment in 1962 to photograph ***The Birds.*** *The two men have enjoyed a friendly personal and professional relationship ever since. Two years ago, Halsman found himself back in Los Angeles again, this time to shoot a series of the Hitchcocks at home for a cover feature for the French Vogue. Then again last year, Halsman and his wife Yvonne spent some time with Hitchcock on the set of* ***Family Plot*** *in San Francisco. Hitchcock, whose reserve is notorious, is not known as an especially chummy sort of fellow. What drew the two men together?* "Probably," *Halsman suggests only half joking,* "it was because I kept my tie and jacket on. He accepted me as being a gentleman. Because we were working together, we had luncheon together several times. From time to time he would tell me a not always very clean joke. He was kind enough to invite my wife and me to dinner at Chasen's (where he often entertains). He discovered I know something about wines. Hitchcock has an extraordinary collection of wines, including many that I know cost over $100 a bottle. 'When do you drink those?' I asked. He said, 'almost never. They're too good to drink by myself and my friends don't understand wines. Once when we had company I served them my most expensive wine and while they oo'ed and ah'ed over the salad dressing, nobody mentioned the wine.' I said, 'Then what do you do with it?' And he replied, 'There are a few people I know who understand wines. From time to time I send them presents.' He sent us a case of Cheval Blanc, an extraordinary gift, really."



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Philippe Halsman

Halsman describes the Hitchcock he knows:

"He is a man who doesn't show much emotion. His face very seldom expresses anything except a kind of withdrawal mixed with concentration. He is very silent, morose, and often looks his age. But when you speak about movies, suddenly the mask falls, he comes very much alive, he gesticulates, and suddenly you have the feeling that you are talking with a very young man because he is full of life and enthusiasm. It is also quite amazing how nothing escapes his attention. He still reads, for instance, six newspapers every morning. When he wants to be, of course, he is a marvelous entertainer with a great sense of humor. Yet, in some ways, it seems to me, Hitchcock has *created* his own personality. Because, I think, behind the Hitchcock that I photographed, there is another Hitchcock that nobody knows. It is impossible to get past the Hitchcock who is always wearing a black or navy blue suit, white shirt, and dark necktie. For example: I speak several languages. One day Hitchcock suddenly started to speak German with me; not perfect, but *very good* German. I was quite surprised. He explained that he had once worked in Germany. He is not a man who shows off. There are reserves in him. And that gives him a certain kind of strength. From time to time I would write to him, but do you know, I never had a letter from him? The people around him are very fond of him, which is a very good sign.

"I guess he is a little bit slowed down by age. He is even more monolithic. He has even less expression than he used to have. There is always the feeling that he is in perfect self-control. And so he is more silent and it takes more effort to get him out of his shell. But as I said, he is extremely sharp when he directs and he is extremely young and enthusiastic when he talks about movies. Other things seem to interest him less. He wears a pacemaker now and must have it checked regularly. He has a standing monthly appointment with his doctor. He leads — as he always did — a meticulously ordered life. He eats and drinks sparingly. The Hitchcocks have no maid. Mrs. Hitchcock prepares the food. They entertain seldom. Right now, Hitchcock's dog Sarah, a Scotty, is the most important thing in his life. He will rise at seven a.m. to walk her, than go back to bed to sleep. And, of course, he has marvelous wines, although he seldom seems to drink them."

When you photograph someone, what are the problems that you usually run into?

"The problems are two-fold: one, the morphological problem is how to capture the face at its most characteristic and interesting angle. And then comes the other problem, which is a much greater one: the psychological. Most people feel embarrassed by the intrusion of the camera. Especially someone who is not very self-assured may fall apart, just because he is posing. To get the truth of the situation is often very difficult. But when you can get the subject to talk to you, then the face comes alive and the mask drops. Instead of a confrontation between a human being and the glass eye of the camera, it becomes then an encounter of two human beings, and this is the interesting part. It becomes a psychological adventure."

What was it like, then, shooting Hitchcock?

"He is a marvelous subject! His face is so unusual! The first pictures that I made of him tried to be humorous. Usually he would suggest some other solution to the

same problem which was at least as funny as mine. He had marvelous visual ideas. He enjoyed directing photographs of himself and I think he also enjoyed showing me that he could do possibly better than I. It became a kind of game. He is also a very very good actor. On the set when he has to show an actor what to do (and he does this seldom) it's absolutely marvelous."

As a photographer, how do you react to his work?

"You see. . . very often a moviemaker is so much in love with photography that the beauty of the photography overshadows the story. Now, as a photographer, a portraitist, I am trying to capture the essence of the human face and I am less interested in producing a pleasing composition than in capturing a psychological truth. And therefore I feel that in some respects my work is related to his because he sacrifices everything for the story and he is less interested in capturing beauty than in presenting everything with the utmost psychological strength. The kinship between Hitchcock and me is that I want to inform, to show. I don't try to show off my art or shock the viewer. I try to show off my subject. I try to make the picture be in the style of my subject, and not in my own style. So in that sense, Hitchcock was very easy to photograph because he has a great deal of style and he has a public presence, and he wasn't afraid of the camera."

Was there any particular shot that you wanted that you couldn't get?

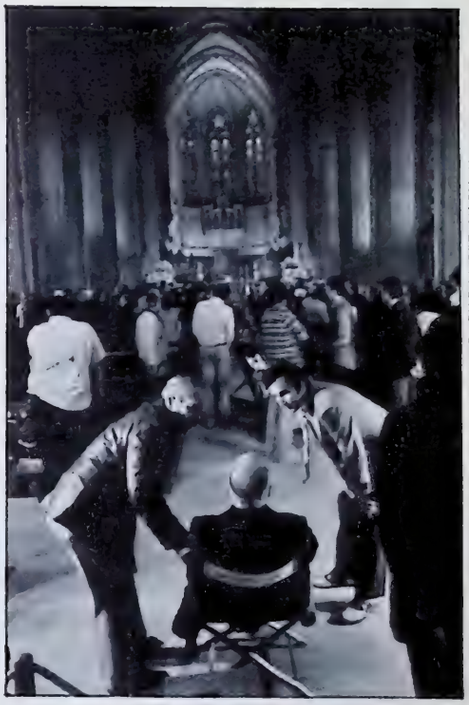
"Yes! I had a great idea: to photograph Hitchcock taking a bubble bath. It would have been a marvelous satire on Hollywood! At first Hitchcock agreed. My wife and I started to experiment with bubble baths, to find the one with the most bubbles, the one that was longest-lasting. When we were all ready, the telephone rang. It was Hitchcock's secretary who told us that he was ill and had been ordered to bed by his doctor. We thought it might have been a 'diplomatic' illness, but there were reports on the radio and we began to be worried for him. Five days later the appointment was reset and we arrived with all our equipment and a giant bottle of bubble bath. But just as we were getting set up, Hitchcock told us that Universal wouldn't give him permission to do the photograph. He said they thought it was against his 'image'. Now, he is much more important than Universal. He could have over-ruled them. And this breaks my heart. It would have been an unforgettable picture! He has some limitation in movement and it is difficult for him to take a bath. Although I told him I wouldn't enter the room until he was in the bath, I suppose he thought better of it. I decided that the most gentlemanly thing to do was not to say anything.

"You see, he is the perfect image of a gentleman and he forces you to be a gentleman too."

James Monaco

A.J.H., his wife Alma, and his dog Sarah.
Cover: Hitch a few days before his 75th birthday.

The Master of Suspense and the Master's Pacemaker.



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*On Location for **Family Plot** in Grace Cathedral, San Francisco. Overleaf: Halsman suggestion for a poster for **Family Plot.***

**When you speak about movies,
suddenly the mask falls,
and Hitchcock comes very
much alive... suddenly you have the feeling that
you are talking with a very young man.**

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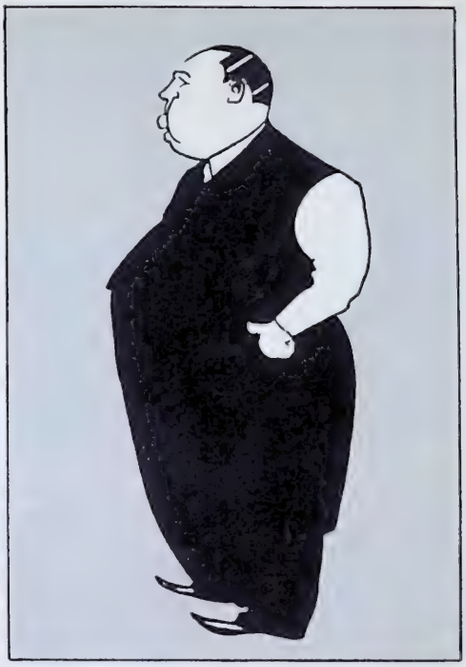
The Last Great Silent Director

by John Russell Taylor

When he was shooting the climactic scene of his new film, **Family Plot**, in Grace Cathedral, San Francisco, Alfred Hitchcock took time out between shots to explain to me what he was doing. The action in question was the kidnapping of a bishop before the uncomprehending eyes of his congregation, in the middle of mass. The effect, said Hitchcock, has to be of something happening so quickly and unexpectedly that it is over before anyone can quite grasp it. So, he was doing it in a series of isolated shots — Karen Black's head moving out of frame as she springs to life from a simulated faint, a hypodermic needle penetrating the bishop's arm, a close-up of the bishop's face as he loses consciousness, a confused reaction from the congregation, and a quick flash of the kidnappers and their prey vanishing round the corner before anyone can do anything. No master-shot at all, for two perfectly good reasons: that Hitchcock never shoots anything he does not intend to use; and that this way there is no need to bother with tiresome technicalities like how Karen Black manages to get to her feet so quickly or how they hoist the bishop to his feet and drag-carry him out. We know they must have done it, and that is all we need to know: the sequence is true to psychological time by ignoring literal time altogether.

Interestingly enough, when he was describing the effect he intended with this montage Hitchcock actually used the phrase "you know, like in a silent film". And it occurred to me that this is probably a key (though not of course *the* key, since it would be simplistic to suppose that anything so complex could be accounted for by one catch-all explanation) to the consistency of Hitchcock's style and the sinewy economy of his cinematic story-telling through the years. For when one thinks about it, the progression from silent to sound cinema has tended to be in the direction of greater and greater literalness, an elaborate (and often unnecessary) spelling-out of everything in the name of "realism". This, after all, was what Rudolf Arnheim feared would happen when writing *Film als Kunst* in 1932: the general feeling that speech in films worked primarily to make them more life-like, would lead to a naive demand for literal believability at the expense of all the subtler non-literal conventions of story-telling the silent cinema had built up, protected by its audience's inescapable awareness that a silent film had to function through a convention rather than the literal reproduction of reality.



Magazine caricature, 1935.

The very early sound period was one of experimentation, in which, side-by-side with very immobile transcriptions of stage plays and such, film-makers like Lubitsch in his early musicals, and Clair, and Hitchcock most famously in **Blackmail**, combined the economy of which silent shooting was capable with the additional expressiveness which sound, including but not entirely consisting of speech, allowed them. It was obvious, for instance, that in some cases a line or two of dialogue could be more economical than a piece of pantomime plus a long and cumbersome title. But on the other hand there were many places where all that was really needed was an indication that, say, a couple who have quarrelled are making it up: we did not need to know the exact words they used in the process, and to spell it out literally would be unnecessarily heavy-handed. But by around 1933 this "realistic" approach had become the normal convention. Audiences, it was suggested, were now too "sophisticated" to accept musical numbers arbitrarily introduced into the action: they had to be explained by placing them on a stage or during a rehearsal (hence the transition from **Love Me Tonight** to **Forty-Second Street**). And the use of dialogue had to be consistent in a film: the film-maker could not choose to give or withhold it according to the whim of the moment, or whatever procedure suited his purposes best.

Curious that the two great hold-outs against this process of stuffy rationalization were Britain's two great contributions to the silent cinema, Hitchcock and Chaplin. Chaplin of course took the more obvious way of refusing to make talkies altogether for some years after everyone else had capitulated. But Hitchcock took, characteristically, a more devious route. Over and over in his films you find that his approach is characterized much more importantly by what he leaves out than by what he puts in. Of course, usually he finds some way of doing this which puts the audience's mind at rest, given that they are now used to having everything spelt out for them: but it is very much with the attitude of a stage illusionist — the quickness of the hand deceives the eye.

To take a mature example of a straight trick: near the end of **North by Northwest**, when Cary Grant and Leo G. Carroll, the man from the CIA, finally meet up, Grant has to describe what has been happening to him and receive some sort of explanation — that is a realistic necessity. On the other hand, we already know everything that is being said, so it would be boring for us to hear it spelt out again. Hitchcock's solution: to drown out everything with the roar of an aeroplane engine. If we stop and think about it, how is it possible that the whole complicated story could be told and explained in not more than thirty seconds? But of course we do not stop and think about it — Hitchcock is ingeniously taking a shortcut straight out of silent movies. The same with the physically rather complicated action of the kidnapping in **Family Plot**: it is not possible for it all to happen in the time it takes on screen, but the way the scene is shot and edited dislocates our sense of time so that we do not ask the awkward questions, we simply get the general idea that it all seems to happen in a flash.

Another way of handling these ellipses

John Russell Taylor was born in Dover, England, in 1935, and studied English at Cambridge University. He has been film critic for the London Times, *and contributed regularly to* Sight and Sound. *His books include* Cinema Eye, Cinema Ear *(1964),* The Hollywood Musical *(1971), and* Directors and Directions *(1975). He is currently working on the authorized biography of Alfred Hitchcock and is a professor in the Cinema Department at the University of Southern California.*

Over and over in Hitchcock's films you find that his approach is characterized more by what he leaves out than by what he puts in.

Blackmail, 1929. The chase through the British Museum. See also page 22.

is to go to the other extreme: instead of concealing them from our conscious awareness, one can deliberately draw attention to them and dramatise them. There are two good examples of this in **Frenzy**: the famous shot in which the murderer takes Anna Massey into the small house in Covent Garden and instead of following them upstairs the camera moves slowly away across the road while we imagine what is going on inside; and the earlier shot in which the camera stays in the passageway outside the office where we know a dead body is located while another secretary goes into the building and we are with brazen effrontery kept waiting for what seems an eternity before the inevitable scream. In these cases, too, our sense of time is disoriented — as is normal in the silent movie but not as a rule in the talkie, it can be stretched or contracted at will according to psychological rather than chronological reality.

In broader terms, what this amounts to is just one facet of Hitchcock's penchant, again held over from the silent cinema, for purely visual story-telling. It is difficult to discuss this without getting entangled in the kind of theorization about the nature of film which was inescapable at the beginning of the sound era, when many writers on film, having just got their theories straight in terms of silent cinema, felt an understandable irritation at having to accommodate speech and did so very grudgingly, insisting that the movie was essentially a non-verbal medium, and speech should be admitted strictly on suffrance, if there was no practical alternative, however cumbersome, which would enable the film-maker to make his point visually. But here we are not concerned with the rights and wrongs of that long-abandoned argument; merely with one film-maker's practice. And the fact remains that Hitchcock's story-telling methods are almost entirely visual and constructional — it is very rarely that mere spoken words play a crucial role in his work (though, perhaps significantly, the refusal to speak can sometimes be important, as in **I Confess**).

Bearing this in mind, we can see why Hitchcock does not scruple to use technical procedures that in anyone else would instantly be labeled old-fashioned. The kind of rapid montage that he uses in the kidnap scene in **Family Plot**, for instance. There are examples of exactly similar procedures going right back to silent days in his films, including many of the most obviously modern of them, like the shower scene in **Psycho** and the sequence of the first concerted attack of the birds on Bodega Bay, climaxed by a rapid montage of almost-stills of Tippi Hedren as she spins round following their precipitate course across the town square from inside the restaurant window. The first murder in **Frenzy** is handled in exactly the same way (with its obsessive concentration on significant detached details) as the murder in **Blackmail**, with the searching hand convulsively closing around the knife. And the way that many of the suspense highlights, such as the villain dangling from the top of the Statue of Liberty while the stitches on the shoulder of his jacket sleeve give way one by one in **Saboteur** or the somewhat similar literal cliff-hanging conclusion of **North by Northwest**, are drawn out storyboard fashion and finally exist only by virtue of their montage as part of Hitchcock's own mechanistic universe, is absolutely consistent with his formation in silent films.

Consistent, also, with his total recognition that films are machines for working on audiences. Theorists like Kracauer and Bazin may try to found their views of what a film ought to be on the direct and exact correspondence between what is on the screen and external reality. They incline — particularly Kracauer — to suppose that we accept something on screen because we know or believe it from external evidence to be true. Hitchcock, on the other hand, wholeheartedly accepts the artifice (and blames what he regards as the failure of **The Wrong Man** on the insufficiency of external evidence to carry dramatic conviction). It is not for nothing that the whole well-made-play tradition in British theatre is a vital part of Hitchcock's early experience and intellectual background, since that, as exemplified in a book like William Archer's *Play-Making* (1912), depends heavily on the reasonable assumption that in drama whatever seems natural is natural — there are no legitimate and illegitimate illusions, only illusion achieved or not achieved.

This means that for Hitchcock the film remains very consciously a construct, both in its overall dramatic construction and in the details of its visual realization. Hitchcock would have little patience with Romantic speculations on how many children had Lady Macbeth: if it is not there on stage or on screen it does not exist. His unconcern over the fate of the people in the other part of the train in **The Lady Vanishes** ("As far as I know, they're there still") is famous, like his problems working with Raymond Chandler on the script of **Strangers on a Train**, because Chan-

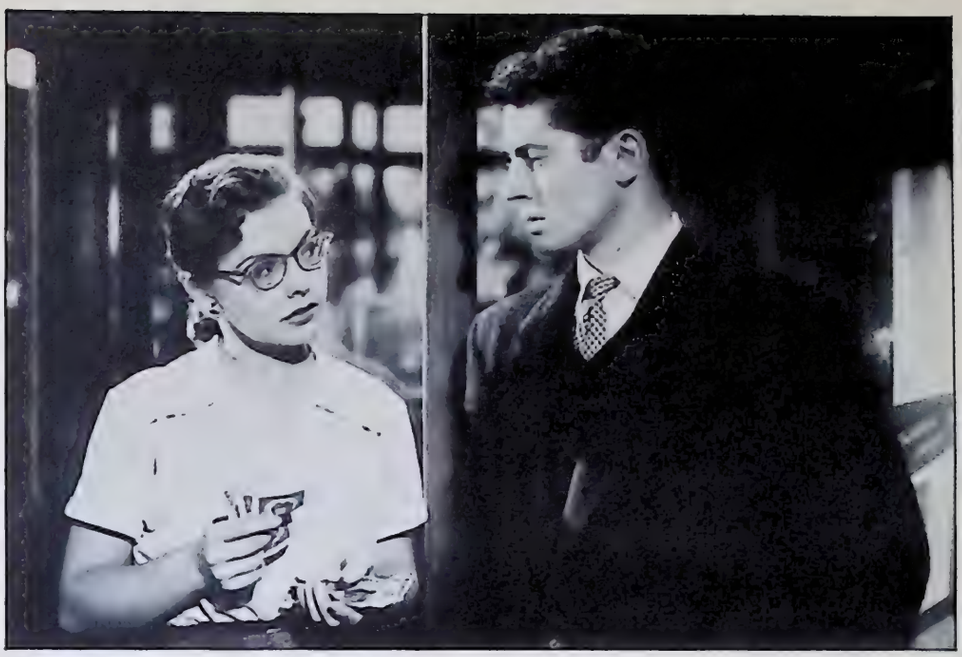
*Anny Ondra, **Blackmail**.*

dler, faced with the task of getting his characters from point A to point B in five minutes screen time, was all too likely to start questioning whether, given what we knew of them at point A, they would ever get to point B at all. Of course Hitchcock's view is in principle unarguable: the characters and the plot are both inventions, and either can be, has to be, modified to fit in with the other, so if you have trouble accommodating the characters to a necessary turn of the plot, you modify the characters, who after all have no separate existence apart from your creation and how you decide they shall express themselves in action.

Possibly this makes Hitchcock's filmic procedures sound like a confidence trick. If so, that is quite correct. But then, what else is any kind of film-making but a confidence trick of one sort or another? The rough, grainy textures of black-and-white photography that de Sica uses in **Umberto D** are as much a stratagem, working on the audience through unconscious association (grainy is real, rough is sincere) to ensure their credence for something which is essentially contrived, as anything in Hitchcock. The only difference is that de Sica's confidence trick involves positively encouraging us to make frequent reference between his film and some notional "real life" control, while it is part of Hitchcock's confidence trick to cut us off from comparisons or associations he does not want us to call on. Hitchcock, you might say, is more honest, or more open, in what he is doing — except that finally any strategy is fine provided it works.

And if de Sica's strategy was more fashionable in the 1940s and early 1950s, Hitchcock's, based on an assumption similar to Mies Van der Rohe's "Less is more", is doubtless more in tune with intellectual fashion today. But it is hardly something that he has come to only in the time that it has been fashionable. His art has always been one of graphic illustration, and the more pointed and economical the better. This is what makes him coincidentally, the ideal director for Structuralist analysis, since he naturally tends to put his films together in terms of signs from which we can read his meanings. And this is the method *par excellence* of the silent movie: the development of a whole language of signs, or "symbols" as they are usually, loosely called, which have acquired some special, stereotypical significance.

At their most obvious we find the simple sexual shorthand of the fireworks in **To Catch a Thief** or the train entering a tunnel at the end of **North by Northwest**. Clichés? But of course: they are used as counters in a game, not intended to carry too much weight in themselves. And the point of a cliché is that it embodies something so generally recognisable that it can safely be taken for granted — just as, though we tend to forget it, the point of a truism is that it is, after all, fundamentally



Laura Elliot, Farley Granger in ***Strangers on a Train,*** *1951.*

true. But Hitchcock's use of graphic signs is much more elaborate than an occasional light-hearted reference: it is the whole structure upon which his films are based. It underlies, for example, all his casting. Hitchcock is the only film-maker who has completely, practically understood the star system and its uses. Most directors tend to close their eyes to it: of course we know all along that it is Cary Grant or Bette Davis up there on screen pretending to be someone else, but we can all conspire to ignore this fact of life, can't we? In practice, no we can't. But if we can accept it we can really make it work for us. A film like **To Catch a Thief** can afford to be so lightly characterised in the script because as soon as we see Cary Grant or Grace Kelly on screen we know more about them than a scriptwriter could ever hope to tell us, we have a very fair idea of what kind of people they are,

A smiling Hitch with Vivian Leigh. ***Psycho.***

of what they would and would not be expected to do. It was a problem with **The Birds**, on the other hand, that its similarly lightly characterised central roles were played by Tippi Hedren and Rod Taylor, not because of any deficiency in their acting ability, but just because they did not have that kind of readymade value as signs. (Interestingly enough, I find that Tippi Hedren in particular has taken on that kind of value retrospectively, mainly as a result of our further acquaintance with her in **Marnie**.)

Once established, this value can be used positively or negatively. Hitchcock's original ending for **Suspicion**, in which Cary Grant, who has been carrying on throughout like a wife-murderer, turns out actually to be a wife-murderer, would have had a shattering effect just because it was Cary Grant, and we had been tempering what the script and the performance seemed to be telling us with our knowledge that Cary Grant would never, never be a wife-murderer on screen. In **Psycho** Hitchcock returned to this idea with a vengeance: when Janet Leigh is murdered halfway through the film it has the force of some cosmic disaster, not so much because it is an unexpected turn of events for the character, but because she is Janet Leigh, the star of this movie, and you don't do that to a star. It is no doubt a measure of the power he had achieved by that stage in his career that he was able to do so, but again that kind of casting against expectation was not new to him even in **Suspicion**: right back at the time of **The Lodger** he had wanted to make Ivor Novello turn out actually to be the Jack-the-Ripper type killer (or at any rate not establish definitely that he wasn't), but was prevented from doing so because Ivor Novello never played a villain.

Akin to Hitchcock's knowing manipulation of the cliché (working with it or

against it) is his taste for the localised gimmick. Everyone knows that he appears momentarily in all his movies (even though it is not strictly true), and looks for the appearance, thereby clearly indicating a constant awareness of the film as a construct — even the most naive film-goer knows that these films were directed by someone, didn't just happen — even to such an extent that in his recent films he has usually got his appearance out of the way as quickly as possible, so as not to distract spectators from the dramatic movement longer than need be.

More important, though, than these little signature flourishes (important though they were in selling the idea of Hitchcock, as apart from the films he made, to a wide public) are the odd memorable shots, those which shamelessly draw attention to themselves. The long moving-camera shot in **Notorious** from the top of the stairs down into close-up of the key in Ingrid Bergman's hand (there is a somewhat similar shot, only in reverse, right near the end of **Family Plot**), the shot in **Saboteur** which takes us right across a ballroom to reveal in close-up that one character has a finger missing, or the shot which Hitchcock admits to having pinched for that, where in **Young and Innocent** the camera traverses a ballroom to reveal in close-up that one of the black-face musicians has a twitch in one eye. Or shock moments like the red flash of the gunshot in **Spellbound**, the zoom-out-track-in on the stairwell in **Vertigo**, or the original trainwreck in **Secret Agent**, which was dramatised, until a preview audience helped them decide otherwise, with an illusion of the film crumpling up and bursting into flames in the projector.

What is the purpose of these shots? Sheer self-indulgence? To an extent, no doubt that is so, and Hitchcock admits as much: some of those he describes with most relish ended up on the cutting-room floor, like the pull-back in the party-scene in **The Lodger** which brought the camera, to general mystification, back from a couple on the dance-floor, between another couple facing each other across a table, and right out of a window and across a terrace. Obviously the constant surmounting of technical challenge is a

*Kim Novak in **Vertigo**, 1958.*

Alma Hitchcock

The first time I met Alma Hitchcock was at a London press lunch for one of Hitchcock's films. It was, of course, his occasion, but as usual, as he likes it to be, Mrs Hitchcock was very much present. She was sitting, I recall, next to one of my colleagues who is justly noted for his old-world gallantry to the ladies. At one point, thinking perhaps to bring her into the conversation, he asked whether she ever read Hitchcock's scripts before he went into production with them. Yes, she said, she usually did. No doubt, he pursued, when you read them you consider them from the woman's angle: who will play the main feminine role and so on? Oh no, said Mrs Hitchcock demurely, I generally look at them from the point of view of how they will cut together.

This exchange sums up Alma Hitchcock in a nutshell. Physically she is tiny and delicate, but mentally she is brisk and practical, not at all the shrinking, domestic wife who is supposed to be behind every great man. Domesticated of course she is — a great cook. as befits the wife of a famous international gourmet. But one need only tot up the number of Hitchcock's films on which her name occurs somewhere in the credits (the name, of course, is her maiden name, Alma Reville) to recognise that their life together has been a constant professional as well as personal collaboration. Indeed, it began professionally. Hitchcock himself always says that his wife got him into pictures, as she was already an established film editor when he was still a not-too-glorified office boy. She says that of course he likes to exaggerate — she was already a film editor, but that was not much more than, and not noticeably different from, a continuity girl at the time. Be that as it may, she had already edited several of the more ambitious British productions of the early 1920s when they met on **Woman to Woman** (1923), a Graham Cutts film on which she was the editor and he was writer, art director and assistant director.

They must have seemed made for each other: both mad about films, born within hours of each other (he on August 13 1899, she on August 14), from the same kind of background. It is recorded that he proposed to her in the middle of a North Sea storm as they were returning from work on a later Graham Cutts film, **The Blackguard**, in Berlin; they were engaged for two years and got married on December 2 1926 in Brompton Oratory. They spent their honeymoon at the Palace Hotel, St Moritz, and every year they possibly could since they have returned there at the same time of year — a sentimental gesture one might not quite associate with Hitchcock's public persona. Since that point their private life has been intensely private, with never more than a necessary minimum of socializing. And in their professional life they have been as much as possible together.

On the films Alma Reville receives various credits through the years: editor, scenario writer, assistant director, adaptor (indeed, I am surprised no women's lib scholar has yet got on to her as a woman who has functioned very well professionally in the cinema). In the later 1920s she wrote films for other directors beside her husband, most notably Adrian Brunel's version of **The Constant Nymph** in 1928 and Henrik Galeen's **After the Verdict** in 1929; on Hitchcock films she worked regularly, officially, up to **Stage Fright** in 1950. Nowadays she says she rarely attends the actual shooting, partly because she does not find the bustle of the very large units employed today congenial. But undoubtedly Hitchcock continues to make use of her sharp editor's eye for flaws in the continuity, and discusses with her, as he always has, the structure and plotting of the scripts. It is evident that he has the greatest possible respect for her cool, dispassionate appraisal, and finds her the most reliable sounding-board of all his regular associates.

A little illustration. When he was making **Psycho**, apparently, he was more than usually secretive about the way he was doing the shower sequence and what would actually happen to Janet Leigh in the course of it. The result, gratifyingly, was that everyone he showed it to in rough cut was totally shattered. Eventually he showed it to his wife. She watched it in appreciative silence, and at the end her only comment was: "You realize that Janet Leigh gulps after she's supposed to be dead?" And indeed she did, almost imperceptibly in one shot which could easily be trimmed of a few frames to remove the effect. No one else, not even the master himself, had noticed. Clearly Alma Hitchcock is a useful lady to have around!

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which was dramatised, until a preview audience helped them decide otherwise, with an illusion of the film crumpling up and bursting into flames in the projector.

What is the purpose of these shots? Sheer self-indulgence? To an extent, no doubt that is so, and Hitchcock admits as much: some of those he describes with most relish ended up on the cutting-room

*Kim Novak in **Vertigo**, 1958.*

up the number.

which her name occurs somewhere in the credits (the name, of course, is her maiden name, Alma Reville) to recognise that their life together has been a constant professional as well as personal collaboration. Indeed, it began professionally. Hitchcock himself always says that his wife got him into pictures, as she was already an established film editor when he was still a not-too-glorified office boy. She says that of course he likes to exaggerate — she was already a film editor, but that was not much more than, and not noticeably different from, a continuity girl at the time. Be that as it may, she had already edited several of the more ambitious British productions of the early 1920s when they met on **Woman to Woman** (1923), a Graham Cutts film on which she was the editor and he was writer, art director and assistant director.

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The Pros and Con of Take One

Big-time critic though he may be, TAKE ONE columnist Jay Cocks still prefers we not publish his photo. He asked friend Chuck Jones to send along this drawing of namesake Michigan J. Frog instead.

TAKE ONE contributor Albert Nussbaum back in 1962, when the FBI was looking for him. They described him as "an intelligent young man" and "an avid chess player" with an "engaging smile".

The pros: super-knowledgeable contributors like critics Jay Cocks and Herman Weinberg, filmmakers Gideon Bachmann, David Helpern, Joe Adamson and Bob Cowan — people whose lives revolve around the creation of film.

The con: Albert Nussbaum, #81332-132, United States Penitentiary, Marion, Illinois.

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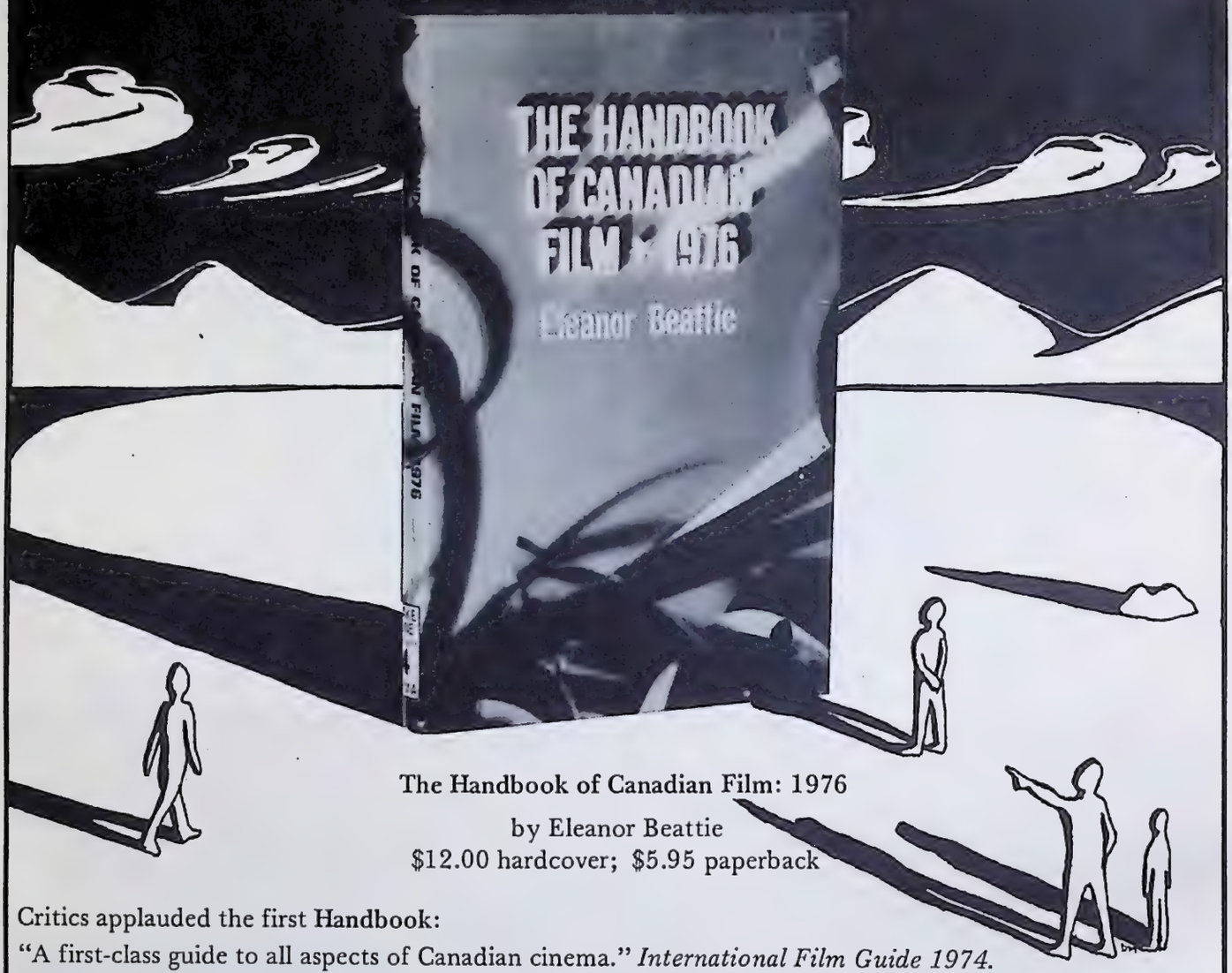

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Since for Hitchcock the drama of film-making is the brainwork, he wants us to share in this too, or at least be aware that it has been done.

factor. But it is moderated by a certain practicality which governs whether the effect, once achieved, is used or not. No, the purpose of these showy, isolated shots seems to be rather, whether Hitchcock would formulate it this way himself or not, to dramatise the process of film-making itself. It is not exactly a Brechtian alienation effect, in that Hitchcock does not want us to remain consistently at a critical distance; he wants to have us where he wants us at any specific point. But since for him the drama of film-making is the brainwork, he wants us to share in this too, or at least be satisfyingly aware from time to time that it has been done.

Again one comes back to the image of the theatrical illusionist, summoned up in relation to their own work by film-makers as disparate as Bergman and Fellini. Hitchcock loves to create an illusion, but he does not want the illusion to be so complete that we do not ever realize it is an illusion: after all, where would the fun be in that, if we just passively accepted it, instead of being astonished and amazed? It is a vital part of his effects that we be aware something is being done cunningly to work upon us, that we wonder intermittently how it is being done, and that even if we guess it still works. There is an element of sheer effrontery in Hitchcock's showmanship which has frequently been remarked upon, usually in some vaguely moralistic, derogatory sense, as though to signify that once we recognise it we have seen through him and can now safely dismiss him as beneath serious consideration.

And yet, the point surely is that his films withstand endless re-seeing, and continue to manipulate our responses even when we are perfectly aware that that is what they are doing. One might fruitfully compare him with such other old devil manipulators as Borges, Nabokov and of course Hitchcock's own favourite among classic film-makers, Bunuel; and it is surely significant of an element of naivety in film criticism that such a realization apparently causes so much trouble in the hearts and minds of so many film critics when it hardly bothers literary critics, brought up in a more confident, more inclusive discipline. (But then, it is doubtful if such a simplistic formulation as Kracauer's *Theory of Film* would be accorded serious attention in any other field of practical aesthetics.)

And all the key qualities can be found clearly, recognisably present right back in Hitchcock's silent films, together with clearer indications of what elements went initially to the formation of his style. Hitchcock has never been one to care much about achieving a casual, natural look in his lighting and composition. Right back to the early 1920s he admired the lighting techniques of Hollywood movies, which through back-lighting achieved a telling separation of the human figures from their settings; while by nature, with his impatience of carefully graded transitions, his search for the moments of maximum intensity, he would seem to be a born Expressionist.

England, 1926. Young Director Alfred J. Hitchcock and continuity girl/ future wife, Alma Reville, lower right.
See box page 16.

Even in **The Pleasure Garden** there are lighting effects that could come right out of **Frenzy**, such as the extraordinary shot near the end in which Miles Mander, already crazed after murdering his native wife, threatens Virginia Valli in a quite unrealistic spotlight which casts a complex and grotesque shadow. **The Lodger** is full of effects like the lights (a tram? a train?) which flash on the wall of the lodger's darkened room as he arrives, the intricate play with mirrors and reflections, and Ivor Novello's own bravura performance, which is often more suggestive of Conrad Veidt then (or of Anthony Perkins in **Psycho** !), that create a very Germanic *stimmung* for the dark, uncertain world outside the cosy, prosaically-lit confines of the landlord's sitting-room.

And **Downhill**, one of Hitchcock's most consistently inventive silent films (though remembered now chiefly for Ivor Novello's anguished question on being expelled from his public school: "Does this mean I won't be able to play for the Old Boys' team, Sir?"), contains innumerable indications of where Hitchcock had come from and where he was going to. There are shots of which Sternberg might have been proud like the scene of romantic dalliance behind a bead curtain which continues to sway voluptuously after the couple have passed through it and casts decorative shadows on them. There are

The Hitchcock films we can't see

Rope, The Trouble With Harry, the remake of **The Man Who Knew Too Much** and **Vertigo** are all owned by Mr. Hitchcock. Circulation of these films has been halted by his agent, who hopes to re-release them commercially as a package deal or a festival. Bids for the package are now being accepted from distributors, and it is said that the bidding begins at two million dollars. A formidable price in this time of The Crunch.

Rear Window, on the other hand, is currently in litigation. Pursuant to an obscure copyright law, a man (whom Hitchcock has called an "ambulance chaser") has initiated suit against Paramount Pictures and the director for failing to respect a prohibition against screening a film based on a written work until the late author's estate is settled. The film may not be seen under any conditions until the lawsuit is settled, and this will very likely consume several more years.

While high finance and low law hold up these five films, pity the poor public's being cheated of great art...

— eds.

odd shots like one of Novello, once he has started "downhill" (on a down escalator, of course), ascending the stairs to his cheap lodgings and throwing a giant shadow, which seem to come straight out of **Raskolnikov**. And there are very complicated and subtle shots like the one which begins our hero's sojourn in the "world of make-believe". He has just been turned out of his own home by an irate father. Now we see him in close-up, looking reasonably cheerful, in evening dress. Then the camera pulls back and we realize that he is in fact a waiter. The couple he is waiting on then get up from the table and move on to the dance floor, where they seem to be performing with slightly surprising abandon for a *thé-dansant*. And suddenly, while the camera continues to move out and round, the "waiter" joins in the dance also, and we are able now to see that this is all taking place on a stage, before an audience — it is a sort of chinese-box of illusion within illusion. The first time it works by surprise and suddenly making us conscious of the filmmaker's art and ingenuity being applied; on further viewing it continues to work, but with the added interest of our being able simultaneously to see exactly how it does work.

And this, be it noted, in a film which is not in any way a thriller. (Indeed, none of the nine silent features apart from **The Lodger** has any noticeable connection with the thriller genre, and yet the essentials of Hitchcock's style were clearly laid down by the end of the silent era.) The particular aptness of Hitchcock's ways of directing the audience's attention in the thriller form has often been commented on, even by critics who give full credit to Hitchcock's work outside the thriller and recognise the formula-transcending complexities of much of the later work which takes the thriller as its starting-point. The cleanness and precision of Hitchcock's effects do not preclude the expression of intense emotion, any more than does the ordered formality of Alexander Pope's couplets. (Pope, incidentally, with his elegance, his ruthless humour, his Roman Catholicism, his brilliance at manipulating strict conventions to suit his own creative purpose, his business acumen as one of the first artist-professionals in the modern manner, offers an interesting general comparison to Hitchcock.) A film like **Notorious**, for all its superficial cool, is as darkly romantic as anything Hollywood has to offer, while the obsessive intensity of **Vertigo** and **Marnie** is if anything built up even further by the tight formal checks in which it is held.

And when Hitchcock essays a very remote genre, like the screwball comedy in **Mr and Mrs Smith** or the musical in **Waltzes from Vienna**, he still places his mark indelibly upon them. It would be possible, for example, to imagine Norman Krasna's script for **Mr and Mrs Smith** directed by, say, Leo McCarey with Irene Dunne and Cary Grant in the leads and coming out completely different without a change of wording: Mrs Smith would probably seem rather charmingly wacky instead of, as under Hitchcock's cool scrutiny, aided by a brusquely unsentimental performance from Carole Lombard, coming over as a monster from the outset. It is all a matter of *formal* control, the way the subject is articulated, rather than the nature of the subject itself. Decide what the point you want to make is, hit it hard, and do not let yourself be tempted down picturesque byways. And if something is irrelevant, or relevant only by its absence, then leave it out.

Indeed, the essential of Hitchcock's dramatic method could be summed up in a story he told me of an advertisement he designed for an electric wiring company he worked for in his teens, before he had had anything at all to do with films. What they were selling was a special lead-covered wire which was almost invisible against stone and therefore particularly suited for use in old churches and other historic buildings. For this, Hitchcock came up with a brochure ("coffin-shaped") which had on the cover simply a drawing of an altar frontal at the bottom, with two brass candlesticks above it, and then on top, in gothic lettering, the words "church lighting". No mention of electricity, no hint of wiring, precisely because they were promoting something in which the wiring was invisible and you were unaware that electricity was even being used. What you leave out is just as important as what you put in. Hitchcock has been acting, triumphantly, on that observation ever since.

Cary on Hitch

At 71 Cary Grant is a very busy man. He quit acting ten years ago to start a second career as a business man and, one gets the feeling talking to him, there's a great deal he still wants to do and not all that much time left to do it in. As an actor, Grant (like Jimmy Stewart) found himself in the unusual position of being a regular choice for starring roles in Hitchcock films. Over a period of 18 years he worked in four of them: **Suspicion** (1941), **Notorious** (1946), **To Catch a Thief** (1955), and **North by Northwest** (1959). Not all that many, considering the time span, but in fifty years only one actor has worked more often for the man who thinks actors are cattle.*

Grant was in New York on business recently and took a few minutes to talk about Hitchcock, for whom he clearly shows respect and admiration. Having just flown in from the coast, he hadn't slept all night and although his replies were succinct they were also direct and thoughtful.

How did you happen to first work with Hitchcock?

He was doing a story about an English ne'er-do-well **[Suspicion]**. At that time I had become moderately popular. He sent me the script. I read it and liked it very much. That was it. I was very happy working with him. He's a remarkable man and he gives the actors a wide range. He lets us rehearse it out and then puts it all together. I was always whistling going to work.

But what about all those stories about how tough he is on actors?

The top directors in those days were always collaborators. They didn't take their position too seriously. They trusted actors. Hitch did one certain kind of film. Some directors have tremendous power on the set, throwing their weight around. Hitch has a reputation for being reserved. On the contrary, he's very, very aware. Many people who seem distant are extraordinarily aware. He's a very imaginative man.

*How did you get involved with **To Catch a Thief**?*

As a matter of fact, I had retired at that time. I went around the world. But the expectation of working again with Hitch was too inviting. It also gave me the chance to work with one of the best actresses I've ever worked with in my life, Grace Kelly. She made everything look easy — an extraordinary actress!

*Do you ever think about **North by Northwest** these days, considering that its predictions about the government "alphabet soup" are coming true now?*

I'm not surprised. Hitch was always clairvoyant about such things. In **Notorious** he had the idea for the atom bomb!

What are you doing these days?

Breathing in and out. Just living. I have no connection with film, except that I'm on the Board of Directors of MGM and the Board of Directors of Fabergé, although I've nothing to do with the Brut Productions.

Do you ever feel the itch to get back?

Hell, No! I'm not interested in things that aren't really happening! There's so much to learn in the world. I don't go to see movies, I don't go to see plays, I don't read novels. That might be interesting to some people; I suppose it's all right. But, *I did it!* It's over!

James Monaco

For reviews of all of Cary's Hitchcock films, see pages 25 to 28.

*For the answer to this and other interesting riddles, see p. 47.

Hitchcock's Films: A Critical Guide

by Various Contributors

Contributors

Jay Cocks, born in the Bronx, reviews film for *Time* magazine.

William K. Everson is one of America's foremost film archivists, the author of many books, including *The Western* (with George N. Fenin) and a forthcoming major history of the silent film (Oxford University Press).

Michael Goodwin, a *Take One* Associate Editor, has written for a wide variety of periodicals from *The Village Voice* to *Oui*.

Greil Marcus is the author of *Mystery Train: Images of America in Rock 'n' Roll Music* (Dutton) and a regular contributor to *Rolling Stone* and *The Village Voice*. He has been called a moralist.

Joe Medjuck, *Take One*'s Editorial Director, teaches film at the University of Toronto.

Jim Monaco, a *Take One* Associate Editor, is the author of the just-published (Oxford) *The New Wave*.

Catherine Plumb is a freelance critic and the author of a forthcoming study on Lina Wertmuller (New American Library).

Frank Rich reviews film for the New York *Post* ("Founded 1801").

Donald Spoto is the author of the about-to-be-published (by Hopkinson and Blake) *The Art of Alfred Hitchcock*.

Michael Tarantino works for the New York State Council on the Arts, and has written for *Sight and Sound* and *Take One*.

John Russell Taylor is a former film critic for the London *Times*, has a number of books to his credit, and is currently working on the authorized biography of Alfred Hitchcock.

Naomi Wise is a San Francisco-based film critic.

The Pleasure Garden (1925)
The first frames of Hitchcock's first film announce the major images of his catalogue: showgirls race down a spiral staircase onto a stage as a patron raises opera glasses for a better view. The director improved an unexceptional melodrama by remarkable subjective/objective crosstracking and matched dissolves to contrast the lives of two couples. — *Spoto*

The Mountain Eagle (1926)
Hitchcock's own discounting of this now (apparently) lost early melodrama should not be taken too seriously; Hitchcock in later years had a tendency to minimise all earlier films which concentrated on *style* rather than *content*. Admittedly, British films of the late silent period made on location in Germany, France or Spain did often turn out to be little more than the raison d'être for Continental holidays for their crews, but this one — judging from plot and surviving stills — is not only bizarre, but suggests a relationship to the Stroheim of **Blind Husbands**.
— *Everson*

The Lodger (1926)
Revealing a glimpse of the mature Hitchcock aborning, this early suspense film is not, after all, a story of Jack the Ripper, but rather of the growing hysteria occasioned by Jack's predations, and culminating in the near-lynching of a peculiar, secretive outsider. The heavy UFA-esque atmospherics and misty cinematography scarcely conceal an underlying cynicism and the subtle sense of man's inherent nastiness. — *Wise*

Downhill (1927)
The story of a non-rake's unjust downward progress from public school hero to rat of the Marseilles harbour, **Downhill** is one of the most technically adventurous and visually inventive of Hitchcock's silent films. Brilliant use of chiaroscuro lighting and bold symbolic imagery show how much he had learned from the Germans, as well as to what personal use he was already putting it. — *Taylor*

Easy Virtue (1927)
Quite possibly Hitchcock's most underrated film, and even more possibly, the most sophisticated British film to that date. Despite relatively bland subject matter, none of it in the world of melodrama, Hitchcock works overtime on tricks and devices to make it into a *film*. The procedure may be obvious today, but there was far too little of such exciting trickery in British film of that period.
— *Everson*

The Ring (1927)
The film's cyclic structure literally revolves about a series of round objects: drums, wedding bands, armlets, carousels, circus tents. There is a detached fascination for the comic/grotesque (freaks), but the film's lasting asset is its psychological maturity: lovers' emotions are shifting, and the ending is not really a conclusion.
— *Spoto*

The Ring

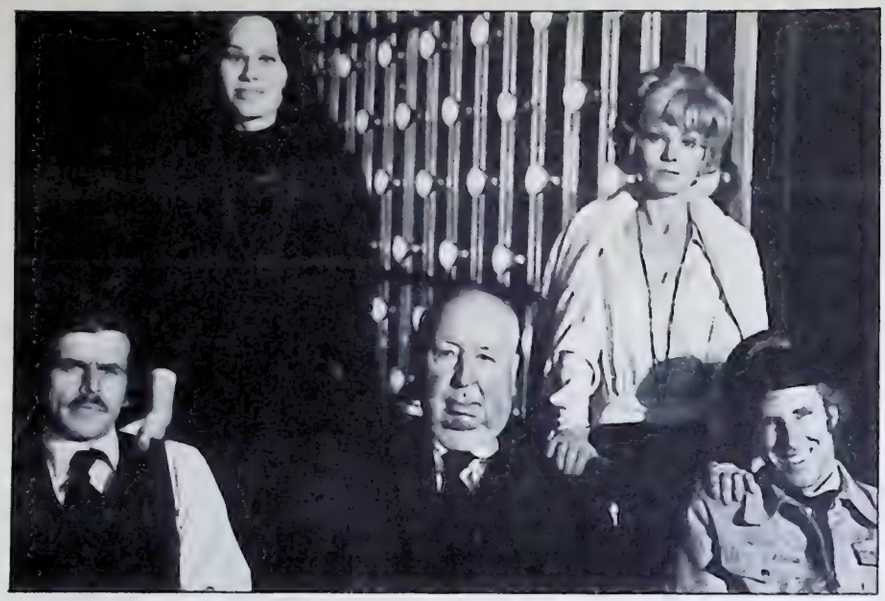
Family Plot

Cast: Karen Black, Bruce Dern, Barbara Harris, William Devane, Cathleen Nesbitt, Katherine Helmond. Prod.-Dir., Alfred Hitchcock; Asst. to Hitchcock, Peggy Robertson; Scrnply., Ernest Lehman, based on Victor Canning's novel *The Rainbird Pattern*; Photog., Leonard J. South; Music, John Williams; Prod. Mgr., Hilton Green; U.P.M., Ernest Wehmeyer; A.D., Howard G. Kazanjian; 2nd A.D., Wayne Farlow; Prod. Illus., Tom Wright; Art Dir., Henry Bumstead; Set. Dec., James Payne; Snd., James Alexander; Film Ed., Terry Williams; Cstm. Dsgn., Edith Head; Spec. Eff., Frank Brendel; Pub., Charles Lippincott.

Taylor on Hitch's 53rd.

Perhaps the surest index of Hitchcock's greatness is his constant refusal to be impressed by his own myth. He will lend himself to all sorts of absurd publicity stunts that anyone more conscious of his standing as one of the greatest figures in world cinema would be too much on his dignity to indulge in. And there is no doubt that while each film he makes is to everyone else guaranteed a place in the history books just because it is the new Hitchcock movie, to him it is just another movie, the necessary stepping-stone from the last to the next. It may well be that he has made so many masterpieces because he has never set out to make a masterpiece. And he is certainly not changing the habits of a lifetime now. Indeed, if anything his films have become even more defiantly modest as he moves confidently through his seventies. **Frenzy** and **Family Plot** are the smallest movies he has made since the 1930s.

And, of course, none the worse for that. **Frenzy**, in fact, seems to me one of Hitchcock's finest films. And **Family Plot**, if not quite in that class, is more than good enough. It is in Hitchcock's lighter manner: not quite a comedy thriller like **The Trouble with Harry**, but a very cheery, genial kind of film, like **To Catch a Thief**, in which nothing really nasty happens to anybody, and almost no one even gets killed. The point of the film, and the fun of it, lies in the construction: two distinct and apparently quite unconnected lines of plot, with two quite distinct groups of characters, keep crossing each other



***Family Plot**'s central characters: William Devane, Karen Black, the Prod.-Dir. himself, Barbara Harris and Bruce Dern.*

until they finally grow completely together. This (relatively) intellectual approach to the putting-together of a film has not always, despite Hitchcock's reputation as a constructor, been typical of him; some of his best films, such as the last one scripted by Ernest Lehman, **North by Northwest**, have been shamelessly picaresque. But this is only to say that Hitchcock is capable of construction as Scribe would have understood it (a breathless succession of incidents following one another with such speed that we never have time to stop and question) *and* as Sardou understood it (a virtuoso manipulation of dramatic syntax so that much of the pleasure comes from watching the pieces fall with perfect timing into their preordained places).

So it is here. The screenplay Ernest Lehman has fashioned out of Victor Canning's enjoyable but rather silly book *The Rainbird Pattern* skilfully plays down the melodrama and extravagance in the conception of the characters, having little or no truck with the pretensions of one of the principal characters, Blanche, to genuine psychic powers and eliminating altogether the psychotic, homicidally maniac side of the principal in the other half of the story, the cool professional kidnapper. In line with Hitchcock's expressed desire to "humanize melodrama" the people in the story are given much more everyday characters and motives, so that one does become interested in and concerned with their fate as human beings. This is particularly so in the case of Madame Blanche, the fake psychic who must be accounted the heroine of this tangled tale: the casting of Barbara Harris, with her built-in lovable oddity, is a stroke of genius, in that because she is who she is we go along with her even when she is behaving most impossibly in her money-mad search for the longlost heir to the Rainbird fortune. Bruce Dern too, as her actor/taxidriver accomplice, has something of the same quality, which has always fascinated Hitchcock, of unforced, natural eccentricity. The third brilliant (if belated) piece of casting is William Devane as the kidnapper: the left side of his face, the Kennedy side; is handsome and heroic, while the right side is low-browed and sinister, so that by cunning alternation he can be shown as attractive, sexy, yet somehow wild and dangerous, Jekyll and Hyde rolled into one.

The connection between the two plot strands is, as you might guess, that the successful kidnapper is the longlost heir, so that as Blanche and George get closer and closer to finding him and telling him of his good fortune, the more and more uncomfortably conscious he becomes of pursuit and the more convinced of the misconstruction he had placed on its reasons. It is not giving anything away to reveal this, since, in line with Hitchcock's preference for suspense rather than shock, the film tells the audience much earlier than the book did, then lets us watch the characters set on a collision course long before they know that they are. And having got that fixed in our minds, Hitchcock can take time out for some stunning set pieces. There is, for instance, the sequence in which Blanche and George, lured to a mysterious rendezvous on a mountaintop, find themselves returning empty-handed in a car whose brakes have been drained. You would not think anyone could come up with new variations on that one, but the sheer brio of the

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The Farmer's Wife (1928)
Hitchcock's raucous comedy achieves its effects not by dialogue, but by entirely cinematic means: lap dissolves, prophetic "zoom" shots and a highly sophisticated structure. Its cartoon characters (never disdained) include vulgar chubbies with huge flowery hats; the parson's mother in a demented wheelchair; an awkward maid with melting sherbet. And how pellucidly lovely the face of Lillian Hall-Davies!
— *Spoto*

Champagne (1928)
The spoilt heroine arrives from a seaplane on a luxury liner in mid-Atlantic and sets in motion a lighthearted story about the trials of sudden poverty among the bright young things. The conventions of love-in-a-hut, the suave moustachioed villain and such are breezily burlesqued, and Betty Balfour is charming. — *Taylor*

The Manxman (1929)
One of Hitchcock's favorite themes — ambition versus love, further complicated by the obligations of friendship — is pursued to a startlingly bittersweet conclusion. The almost fragrant loveliness of the meadows and high cliffs of the Isle of Man seems, in Jack Cox's photography, to augur the transiency of the love the characters fear and find. — *Spoto*

Blackmail (1929)
Everyone remembers the scene in which Hitchcock not only shows but shows off his mastery of the new sound medium with the subjectively distorted soundtrack of the "knife... knife... knife". But the film has a lot of quieter virtues as well in its vivid depiction of a lower-middle-class shopkeeping London probably not so different from Hitchcock's own family background. — *Taylor*

Elstree Calling (1930)
Hitchcock contributed the linking sketches to this really appalling British attempt at an all-star film revue — a running gag in which Gordon Harker's family tinker frustratingly with their new

The Farmer's Wife

The Manxman

Blackmail

Murder

Champagne

Number Seventeen

Rich and Strange

television set and succeed in seeing none of the inaugural show. — *Taylor*

Juno and the Paycock (1930)
Probably Hitchcock's most directly literary adaptation, **Juno and the Paycock** is a straight translation of the O'Casey play, which leaves Hitchcock little room for cinematic creativity. He finds an interesting correlative for stage dialogue in rack-focussing, but for the most part just sets up a scene and lets the Irish Players work it out, often with ludicrously stagey effect. He's right to be embarrassed by the good reviews. — *Monaco*

Murder (1930)
Nicely kinky detective story about an actor who is not satisfied with the verdict of a jury on which he sits and takes the investigation into his own hands. Life in the tatty provincial theatre, a frequent theme in the avid theatregoer Hitchcock's films of this time is colorfully evoked and the eventual solution, involving a villain in drag, shows off to advantage Hitchcock's continuing interest in morbid psychology. — *Taylor*

The Skin Game (1931)
Staid and straightforward version of Galsworthy's social drama about a battle to the death between the old landed gentry and the new industrialists in an English village. It preserves the strengths (and weaknesses) of the play, but does not exactly stretch Hitchcock's talent.
— *Taylor*

Rich and Strange (1932)
Satirist of the bourgeois life though he may be, Hitchcock is here more critical of those who invite chaos by an inordinate yearning for excitement. The film (which earns its title from *The Tempest*, I,ii) is a dreamlike series of sad/comic reflections on the metamorphoses deriving from a sea voyage, on the death-in-life of a silly couple, and the journey that is all life. — *Spoto*

Number Seventeen (1932)
Deliciously sly thriller burlesquing a current stage success which Hitchcock never wanted to direct in the first place. Everybody on screen seems to take the nonsense with complete gravity — even the heroine who was made literally dumb to mirror the general run of heroines' metaphorical dumbness until she finally reveals it was all a "crook's trick", but why and wherefore who can say?
— *Taylor*

Waltzes from Vienna (1933)
Hitchcock's version of the contretemps between Strauss sr and jr is unfairly shunted aside a) because it's not a thriller, b) because it's a disappointing vehicle for its star, Jessie Mathews, whose talents are certainly not exploited, and c) because despite its theme, it has relatively little music. All true. Yet it has charm, a Hollywood gloss, and an interesting *use* of music as counterpoint to visuals. Minor but not unworthy. — *Everson*

subjective shooting and the believable but very funny reactions of the car's occupants, pushed boldly far over towards farce and yet not at all abating the suspense of the scene, make this a classic.

Then again there is the scene which was, I suspect, the nugget from which the whole film was spun: the kidnapping of the bishop in the middle of mass. A scene, by the way, which is not even in the original book. There, a bishop is kidnapped, but it is off-duty, ordinarily clothed, on a quiet country walk. But what, says Hitchcock, is the point of kidnapping a bishop unless you do it while he's being a bishop? Otherwise, it might as well be a stockbroker. And what, the amateur psychoanalyst might add, is the point of kidnapping a bishop at all for Hitchcock? Gleeful flouting of taboo, given his Catholic upbringing, his Jesuit education, and all? Maybe. But certainly this idea was the start of his interest in the property, and certainly the scene in which it is carried out is one of his more finely brutal, ruthless effects.

Though the film was not without its problems in the shooting, the end result makes it all look as easy as falling off a log. Hitchcock taking it easy, Hitchcock enjoying himself, Hitchcock making just another movie on an idea that takes his fancy, sublimely unconcerned about whether it turns out to be a culminating masterpiece or not. And what, after all, could be nicer and more enjoyable than that? Or leave us more eagerly panting for first news of the fifty-fourth?

John Russell Taylor

Goodwin's Report

I'm sorry to report that **Family Plot** is not as good as **Shadow of a Doubt**. There was no reason to expect that it would be, but hope knows no logic. On the other hand, it's a great deal better than **Torn Curtain** or **Topaz**. **Family Plot** is, like **I Confess**, **The Trouble with Harry**, **The Wrong Man** and **Marnie**, mid-range Hitchcock: brilliant in spots, awkward on occasion, terrifically exciting for most of its running time and, finally, a little disappointing. For Hitchcock.

For anyone else, it'd be a masterpiece.

Since **Family Plot** is probably the last picture Hitchcock will make, everyone (including me) has been hoping for some kind of ultimate Hitchcock thriller — a final statement on film, fear and the nature of evil. I suspect that most of the dailies (and some of the weeklies) will review the picture everyone wanted, and duly pronounce it a masterpiece. I wish I could agree; as much as the next guy, I'd love to see Hitchcock go out in a blaze of glory.

But in the context of a serious film journal (not to mention an issue devoted solely to the work of Hitchcock) I can't ignore the fact that, for all its excitement, **Family Plot** trips and falls on a simple structural convention that Hitchcock, of *all* people, should have been able to avoid. Because he invented it.

Halfway through **Family Plot**, Hitchcock gives us an action sequence (never mind what) that's as exciting as anything he's ever done; it's comparable to the crop-dusting plane in **North by Northwest**, or the café/gas station sequence in **The Birds**. Which is just fine, except there's an unspoken understanding that goes along with placing such a powerful sequence in the middle of a film. It's as if Hitchcock were saying, "Don't worry, I'm going to top it."

Consider **North by Northwest**. The sequence with the crop-dusting plane is a stronger dramatic confrontation than most films save for their endings, but what Hitchcock is holding in reserve — a sudden-death chase down Lincoln's nose on Mt. Rushmore — is such an exciting stunt that it buys off the throw-away placement of the crop-dusting plane. Structurally, **North by Northwest** is a steady build to the final climax; the smaller peaks just set us up for Mt. Rushmore.

We know the deal by this time, and we know that Hitchcock knows it too. So when he hits us with a powerhouse action sequence in the middle of **Family Plot**, we can imagine the knockout ending he's got in store for us.

And then the ending doesn't work.

It's not as bad as the ending of **Topaz** (which simply wasn't there at all) — it's just too fast, too predictable and too easy. We're ready for a monster climax, there are even hints of what such a climax might involve, and then the final credits are rolling, people are putting on their coats, and we realize that that *was* the climax.

That's the bad news. Now for the good news.

Aside from the ending, **Family Plot** is better than anything Hitchcock has done in a long, long time. The acting is solid. The script (by Ernest Lehman, who wrote **North by Northwest**) is graceful, funny, and shot through with the kind of understated sexual tension that Hitchcock loves to play with. The plot is a throwback to films like **The Man Who Knew Too Much** and (yes) **North by Northwest**. And the film's sub-stratum is packed with the usual Hitchcock references to sex, food, and the mutability of guilt. It's a film with the kind of internal resonance we seldom see these days.

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The Man Who Knew Too Much (1934)
Perhaps the most brilliant, spirited and sheerly enjoyable of all Hitchcock's British thrillers from the Thirties. The action never flags for a moment, and Hitchcock's characteristic bluff and double-bluff structure has never been exploited with such beaming, gleeful effrontery as in Leslie Banks's adventures in the East End underworld or Edna Best's last-minute foiling of an assassination attempt in the Albert Hall. — *Taylor*

The Thirty-Nine Steps (1935)
The premise is pure Hitchcock: an innocent man becomes involved in a situation which forces him to go on the run. Our identification with the hero is enhanced by the subjective quality of the mise en scène (the images he "sees" as he rides on the train is a case in point). The memory expert who should have forgotten is the ironic punctuation mark. — *Tarantino*

Secret Agent (1936)
Produced between the light **Thirty-Nine Steps** and the dark **Sabotage**, it combines the mood of each. With its ambiguous politics, its dark sexuality and deeply unsettling but unmoralistic moralism, **Secret Agent** takes a satiric stance toward cheap thrills and pursues its deeper theme — the evolution of moral consciousness — with relentless energy. — *Spoto*

Sabotage (1936)
Rich and consistent in its use of bird and water imagery — and in the use of *film itself* as a correlative — **Sabotage** leads the audience from the darkness of Verloc's movie house to a deeper darkness within a viewer. In method and content, this brilliant delineation of universal chaos directly foreshadows **Psycho**. — *Spoto*

Young and Innocent (1937)
A slight but captivating man-on-the-run story featuring a typical two-edged hero-heroine relationship, some of the most bare-faced model shots ever seen, and one of Hitchcock's most spectacular effects at the end when the camera slowly crosses a crowded ballroom during a thé dansant to end up with a close-up of the drummer in the blackface band, his eye convulsively, incriminatingly twitching. — *Taylor*

The Lady Vanishes (1938)
Everyone knows **The Lady Vanishes** is a suspense classic, but it's also Hitchcock's best comedy. Dame May Whitty is simply perfect as little old Mrs. Froy, Margaret Lockwood is nearly as good as the young woman who spends most of the movie looking for her, and the whole thing takes place on the finest trans-European train ride ever committed to film. Although it's less resonant than some of Hitchcock's later films, it can be arguably cited as his most delightful. — *Goodwin*

The Thirty-Nine Steps

The Lady Vanishes

Rebecca

Jamaica Inn (1939)
Doubly disappointing in that it came hot on the heels of Hitchcock's major British triumph **The Lady Vanishes**, and was supposed to climax his career before the migration to Hollywood. A flavorsome but misfired period melodrama of smugglers and wreckers; the best moments of pure Hitchcock suspense are almost tangential to the plot proper. With more action and less mystery (one of the problems of the film was that there really *was* no mystery) deMille did it all so much better in **Reap the Wild Wind**. Incidentally, *both* original novels, rough and bloodthirsty, full of cutlasses and blood, were written by ladies — a point for the psychiatrists to ponder. — *Everson*

Rebecca (1940)
Hitchcock's first American film, **Rebecca** won an Oscar for its producer, David O. Selznick (but not for Hitchcock). Like **Jamaica Inn** (and, more happily, **The Birds**) it is based on a novel by Daphne Du Maurier, egregiously gothic and not a little absurd. The film suffers from being faithful to the book, but there are some nice touches. The Joan Fontaine character (who is never dignified with a name) is a subtle parody of the helpless Gothic heroine, as the ubiquitous Mrs. Danvers (Judith Anderson) is of the demonic Gothic villainess. — *Monaco*

Foreign Correspondent (1940)
One of Hitchcock's more underrated efforts, **Foreign Correspondent** is thriller-as-political document and Hitch's first contribution to the war effort. A film of subtle reversals and transferences (even the windmill turns backwards), it is not so simple as it might seem. The airplane crash at sea is one of Hitchcock's more notable special effects. With Joel McCrea, Laraine Day, Robert Benchley, George Sanders, and Eduardo Cianelli, this is one of Hitchcock's most interestingly cast films. — *Monaco*

Mr. and Mrs. Smith (1941)
Dismissed by the director as "a friendly gesture to Carole Lombard" and ignored by critics for its failure to fit snugly into the standard Hitchcockian mold, **Mr. and Mrs. Smith** nevertheless remains an adroit and disarmingly contemporary comedy of marital mayhem and rediscovery. And if you're collecting objective correlatives, watch for the crossed skis. — *Plumb*

Suspicion (1941)
A marvelously ambiguous film which evokes the anticipatory paranoia of Joan Fontaine when faced with the incorrigibility of her husband (Cary Grant). The audience goes through the mill with her as her fears grow, appear to be realized, and are finally destroyed — although the sly grin on Grant's face at the end leaves a shadow of a doubt. Excellent lighting effects (e.g. Grant bringing Fontaine's glass of milk up the stairs) enhance the intensity of feeling. — *Tarantino*

Saboteur (1942)
Any movie that stars Robert Cummings can't be all good, and **Saboteur** is probably no one's idea of perfection. But the scenes where the typically wronged hero (a factory worker unjustly accused of wartime sabotage) is befriended by other social outcasts (an old blind man, a crew of circus freaks) are uncharacteristically warm by Hitchcock's standards. The final chase, which ascends to the top of the Statue of Liberty, is a tense, ironically amusing preview of the Mount Rushmore climax of **North by Northwest**. — *Rich*

Turns out that famous characterization of actors as "cattle" is a misquote. Hitch took the opportunity of the $125-a-plate gala which followed the world premiere of **Family Plot** at Filmex in April to set the record straight, according to *Variety*.

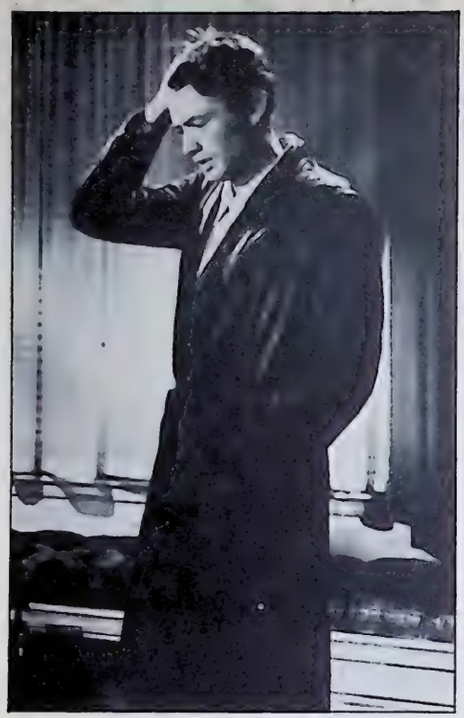
"That's a confounded lie. I never said it. It's a rude, terrible thing to say. What I probably said was actors should be *treated* like cattle!"

Shadow of a Doubt (1943)
Like a Yin-Yang, the sunniest and most comfortable setting calls for the most purely evil villain. Uncle Charlie's personable facade conceals a gynocidal psychopathology; in a classic Hitchcock guilt-transfer, his adoring niece (also named "Charlie") gradually assumes moral responsibility for her uncle's predatory potential, while her growing, secret awareness of evil necessarily overcomes her complacent innocence. Ultimately, she must kill her beloved namesake, thus acquiring a blood-guilt of her own — a Virgin who can only grant death, not absolution. — *Wise*

Lifeboat (1943)
Part of Hitchcock's genius is the ability to reverse our expectations without the use of cinematic trickery. This film prefigures the crop-dusting scene in **North by Northwest** through the imposition of a claustrophobic framework upon an expansive area. The film's premise negates any possibility of extensive camera movement. Thus, by necessity, **Lifeboat** relies heavily on depth of characterization — most successfully when operating outside of the Nazi-Allies dialectic.
— *Tarantino*

Bon Voyage/Aventure Malgache (1944)
Two brief occasional pieces Hitchcock made for the British Ministry of Information as his contribution to the war effort. Both are entirely in French. **Aventure Malgache** is not particularly interesting, but **Bon Voyage** turns on a typical Hitchcock device of manipulating the audience's point of view, so that first we see the escape from France of a British serviceman as he sees it, then we are shown what he does not know and are forced to reinterpret the whole action. — *Taylor*

Spellbound (1945)
A tight and witty script (especially bold in its comic use of Freudian *double entendres*) and a rigorous point of view raise



Spellbound

Spellbound above the merely melodramatic. Memorable for Dali's dream-remembrance and a huge artificial hand, the film celebrated vulnerability: it's intriguing to ask who is really spellbound. — *Spoto*

Notorious (1946)
There's an undercurrent of sexual perversity in many of Hitchcock's films, but nowhere does it lie closer to the surface than in **Notorious**. Grant loves Bergman, but that doesn't stop him from turning her out in the name of national security. And once she's become a whore he's *really* on the hook. (ref. *Story of O.*) Guilt-transfer? It's a round-robin. Everyone knows about the tracking crane shot, but can anyone tell me what it says on the wine label? — *Goodwin*

The Paradine Case (1947)
Hitchcock insists on the potentially symbolic value of quite ordinary solid objects (eyeglasses, statues, portraits, swords, cut-glass lamps) and so transforms theatrical convention and cinematic cliché. A story told in terms of a staircase, its characters — perhaps Ethel Barrymore's Lady Horfield most of all — stay, annoyingly, in the mind. — *Spoto*

Rope (1948)
Famous, or notorious, as Hitchcock's final achievement of a scheme he had had since the Thirties for filming Patrick Hamilton's classic melodrama with no cuts at all, in reel-long takes which merge imperceptibly into one another. Given the nature of the subject, the technique seems ponderous and perverse, depriving Hitchcock masochistically of what he has always said to be the film-maker's greatest weapon, the power of the cut. — *Taylor*

Under Capricorn (1949)
Crime and secrets and guilt... and an evil housekeeper: **Under Capricorn** displays many of the Hitchcock elements but as in **Rebecca** they are set this time not in the framework of the thriller but of the gothic romance, a problem Hitchcock doesn't succeed in surmounting until he reverses the sexual geometry in **Vertigo**. A vehicle for Ingrid Bergman, **Under Capricorn** continues the experiments with color and long takes begun in **Rope**. As the director told his star: "It's only a movie, Ingrid!" — *Monaco*

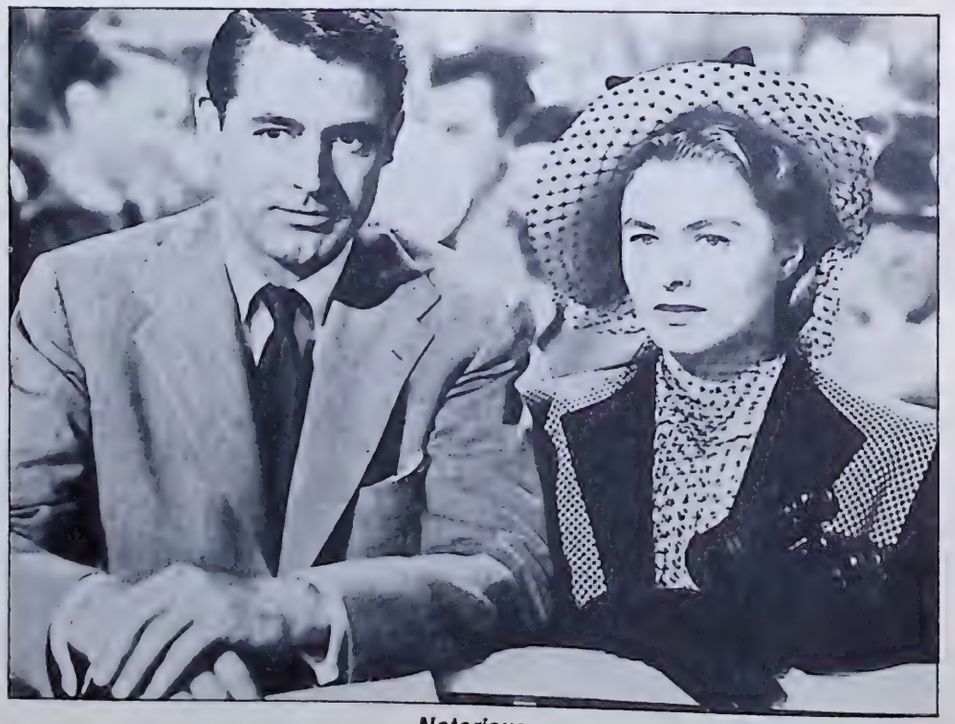
Stage Fright (1950)
Long miscalculated by critics, **Stage Fright** rewards on several levels: a flawless cyclic structure, deliciously wicked humor and splendid performances. Alastair Sim, Sybil Thorndike and Joyce Grenfell walk off with the film (recall the latter's invitation to "shoot lovely ducks!"), and Marlene Dietrich, bejewelled and breathless, is irresistible in a role which parodies her own image. — *Spoto*

Strangers on a Train (1951)
A brilliant, insidious movie. Robert Walker's performance is properly horrifying — it is unexcelled, I think, as a portrait of criminal pathology — but it is also funny, and dangerously charming. There are at least three set pieces here that have become Hitchcock classics: the killing on the amusement park island, the tennis match (with Bruno staring fixedly ahead as heads turn all around him, following the action), and the runaway carousel. — *Cocks*

I Confess (1952)
By carefully balancing three sets of characters, the film contrasts religious and civic idealism with romantic fantasy. Like **Suspicion**, its major concern is the sealed fantasy life of a neurotic woman, and it offers reflections on the delicate balance necessary to achieve a healthy spiritual life. — *Spoto*

Dial M for Murder (1954)
A delicious yarn of a picture, **Dial M for Murder** continues Hitchcock's Ropish fascination with the claustrophobia of the proscenium arch, this time without the affectation of reel-long takes. Ray Milland dominates, reading his lines with a special savor. See especially the long scene in which he masterfully weaves his spider's web around Swan/Lesgate. ("I was planning to palm you off with an indifferent port...") Essentially a dialogue film, **Dial M** nevertheless is one of Hitchcock's most subtle visual accomplishments, despite its being shot in 3-D. As Truffaut says, "something very difficult has been carried out in a way that makes it seem quite easy." — *Monaco*

Rear Window (1954)
One of the great ones. Again, we are immobilized. This time with Jeff (James Stewart) laid up with a broken leg in his Greenwich Village apartment in the heat of summer, his only distraction the panoply of "cinemascope" picture windows across the courtyard. **Rear Window**, from a story by Cornell Woolrich, *is* cinema, with one decisive structural twist: the artist this time is the spectator. At the climax Jeff, representing all us voyeurs, will fall into the courtyard, the space that separates our vantage point from the life on the other side. Only then is he able to turn his back on the rear window and relate directly to Lisa (Grace Kelly). A film about seeing, it paradoxically has a superb soundtrack, full of the noise of the living. — *Monaco*



Notorious

Rear Window

To Catch a Thief (1955)
A film to be valued for its moments. The use of color as a psychological indicator points to **Vertigo** and **Marnie**. The car chase offers a fine example of how Hitchcock builds a scene through the editing of rear projections. Finally, the film abounds in sexual innuendos, with the Kelly-Grant scenes assuming an aura of sly sensuality. — *Tarantino*

The Trouble with Harry (1956)
Is of course that he's dead, a tiresome state of affairs that none of the eccentrics who stumble over his body in the course of a glorious autumn day in Vermont seem to let worry them unduly. Hitchcock back very much in his English mood, with a lot of cool, throwaway humour which is only formally black around the edges. He admits it was made as something of a self-indulgence, and suffered the fate of most such by being commercially unsuccessful and widely misunderstood except in England, where they are weird enough to find this sort of thing funny. — *Taylor*

The Man Who Knew Too Much (1956)
A song becomes a scream; a concert becomes a struggle to decide in favor of life; a man's height becomes an image of his dominance and his vulnerability; a journey round the world becomes an inner journey; and a man who knows too much is disabused of his self-importance. Where the first version had easy wit and a kind of grimy nonchalance, the second has brilliant irony and excises anticlimax. It is one of Hitchcock's ten greatest films. — *Spoto*

The Wrong Man (1957)
Hitchcock took all he knew about narrative filmmaking, all his stylistic cunning

Family Plot starts out as a simple (and familiar) tale about an "innocent" couple (Barbara Harris and Bruce Dern) who become accidentally (and dangerously) involved with a "guilty" couple (Karen Black and William Devane) who are in the process of pulling off a series of high-ransom kidnappings. But this time out, Hitchcock underscores his preoccupation with the identity between good and evil by making his "innocents" small-time con artists running a fake spiritualist scam. (I'm going to quit using these damn quotes; "good," "evil," "guilt" and "innocence" *always* have quotes around them in a Hitchcock movie.)

Hence, instead of building his story around a good/evil morality, Hitchcock uses a sliding scale on which slightly evil and more evil are the clearest distinctions provided. In addition, he intensifies the moral confusion by making his evil kidnappers extremely attractive (they're a warm, loving couple) while he shows the nice fake spiritualists constantly bickering about sex, and everything else.

Obviously, with all this uoral ambiguity floating around, the characterizations have to be precisely on-target for the film to work, and Hitchcock has drawn finely-tuned performances from nearly all of his actors. Bruce Dern seems more relaxed in his leading role than ever before, and his arch mannerisms are nearly gone. Barbara Harris plays the spiritualist with a delicious blend of open sexuality and dippy comedy. William Devane turns in a perfectly cut and polished characterization as the soft-spoken kidnapper; it's a role that James Mason could have played, but no better than Devane. Karen Black seems a bit out of her depth in such fast company, but she's very beautiful — which is really all the role calls for. All the supporting performances are hard-edged and competent, in the Hitchcock tradition.

Best of all, the moment-to-moment cinematic texture of **Family Plot** shows Hitchcock in perfect control. Individual scenes are stunning, transitions are breathless, and the structure of the film (save the ending) is deeply satisfying as only a Hitchcock film can be. Technically, **Family Plot** is relatively restrained; there are no spectacular camera moves, and the staging is unobtrusive. Although it must be noted that Karen Black's first on-screen appearance is managed with a pyrotechnic slight-of-hand that only Hitchcock could accomplish.

Still, if Hitchcock's technique does not draw attention to itself, it works as brilliantly as ever. Toward the end of the film, Barbara Harris sets out for what we know will be a crucial (and possibly fatal) confrontation with the kidnappers. She leaves, and the scene shifts to the kidnappers' house, where Hitchcock involves us so quickly and deeply that we completely forget Barbara Harris is due to arrive. When the doorbell rings, we're just as startled as the kidnappers. Now *that's* filmmaking.

Finally, there's the matter of the wink. Surely you will have heard about the wink by now. Why is Hitchcock (for it's surely his wink, even though Barbara Harris does the screen honors) winking at us? Is it just a genial goodbye? A last dig in the ribs from the Master?

I can't help suspecting that Hitchcock means the wink to underscore a final joke. Everyone has been hoping that **Family Plot** would cap Hitchcock's career with a final statement, an ultimate twist. But Hitchcock has been making films for 50 years. Somewhere between **The Lodger** (1926) and **Frenzy** (1973) Hitchcock has said his piece: complete, perfect, whole. There's nothing to add. He knows it, and we know it too, even if we hate to admit it — because admitting it means that the movie's over, the climax done, put on our coats and go home.

The ultimate twist of **Family Plot** (both as a movie and Hitchcock's last film) is that there's no twist at all. Just another Hitchcock movie.

Michael Goodwin

Spoto's Conclusion

From Victor Canning's genteel British novel *The Rainbird Pattern*, Alfred Hitchcock and Ernest Lehman, who had collaborated on **North by Northwest**, have fashioned an intriguing scenario.

Rich, elderly Julia Rainbird (Cathleen Nesbitt) enlists the aid of spiritualist Blanche Tyler (Barbara Harris) in an effort to locate her sole surviving heir, a lost nephew. Attracted by the promise of a $10,000 reward, Blanche and her boyfriend, aspiring actor and taxi driver George Lumley (Bruce Dern) set out to find the missing man. At the same time, jewelry merchant Arthur Adamson (William Devane) and his woman Fran (Karen Black) are conducting a series of kidnappings and fantastic jewel thefts. The paths of the couples accidentally intertwine, and it turns out that Adamson, unaware of the fact, is really the Rainbird heir. After a series of bizarre incidents — including the attempted murder of Blanche and Lumley — Adamson and Fran are trapped, Blanche and George saved.

Although **Family Plot** capitalizes on several modern concerns and interests (psychism, kidnapping, electronic gadgetry in Adamson's secret room), it is, thematically, very much mainstream

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Psycho

Marnie

and flamboyant fantasies of guilt, to make a film based on a real case history. **The Wrong Man** is severe, brooding, quite revealing, unconfined by strict adherence to the facts even if it was shot almost entirely on location in bleak and forbidding New York. Nowhere is Hitchcock's well-advertised fear of the police so palpable — or so richly justified — as it is here. The movie was not a commercial success — perhaps because it cut too close — and Hitchcock never tried anything like it again. It is still one of his best and most daring films, and probably his most private. — *Cocks*

Vertigo (1958)
Vertigo is two movies, both dreams of death. Hitchcock leads us to believe that the first movie is the only movie, until in a single, shattering, wordless image (the mission, seen POV Judy) the floor of the theater seems to fall away, dropping us into the second movie that's been building all along. San Francisco as City of Dreams; Kim Novak as Queen of the Night. We don't watch **Vertigo**, we remember it. — *Goodwin*

Tangled and lush, made with a sinister passion, **Vertigo** is Hitchcock's definitive portrait of romantic obsession. Suspense, at least of the traditional kind, doesn't have much to do with it. Hitchcock instead goes after — and gets, quite splendidly — the particular, convoluted tension of guilt. This is a ghost story, in the best sense, so intricate that it is hard to determine who is more haunted, Kim Novak or James Stewart, who gives one of his greatest performances. The ending is quintessential, perhaps definitive, Hitchcock: Novak's death condemns Stewart, even as it redeems him. — *Cocks*

Hitchcock's masterpiece is a supremely poetic, dreamlike negation of the romantic fallacy. Its riches seem inexhaustible as, in layer after layer of subtheme, it depicts the wasted energy spent in pursuit of the unattainable; the relationship between love and death; the precariousness of human verticality; and the ironic aptness of the film experience to illuminate what it often creates: illusion and human artifice. — *Spoto*

North by Northwest (1959)
The indisputable summit of Hitchcock's oeuvre: everything comes together here. The political matrix of Hitchcock's anxiety, heretofore most often expressed in subjectively psychological terms is now made manifest: "F.B.I.... C.I.A.... O.N.I.... we're all in the same alphabet soup," explains the Professor. Roger O. Thornhill's ordeal will end in a scramble over the stone-faced, unseeing symbols of the nation. In the central scene of the film — the famous cornfield scene — Thornhill, the ad man in the gray flannel suit which is really silk, faces a downhome farmer across a ribbon of road, disappearing in the distance at the vanishing point: an icon of the nation that should be on our postage stamps. — *Monaco*

Menace in the noonday sun, cropduster in the cornfield, an ironic carnival of terror. Everyone loves the movie, and it is hard to believe that, when it first appeared, it was ungratefully received. Critics thought, initially, that Hitchcock was entirely serious, had gone — here — rather too far. **North by Northwest** (the title comes from Hamlet) is as nifty a piece of self-parody as anyone has ever accomplished on screen, funny and sure-footed. Hitchcock resists the usual temptation of the genre (insinuating smugness, a certain self-contemplation). He finds and holds the perfect balance between laughs and thrills, a kind of keen, ironic suspense. — *Cocks*

Psycho (1960)
For Hitchcock, the American dream has become a nightmare. Just beneath the world of small-town romantic love, of lunchtime liaisons, of half-eaten cheese sandwiches and of motels off the main road, sprout demonic roots. **Psycho** reaches beyond the conventions of Gothicism; it is at once a tract on Puritan Mom-ism and a psychoanalysis of the viewer. — *Spoto*

The Birds

Perhaps the most perfectly made film of all time. A disturbing black comedy, though the humour may not be apparent on first viewing. — *Medjuck*

The Birds (1963)
It's Hitchcock's definitive comedy. Think of it that way, as a great, cosmic practical joke, full of ironic dread. The director has always set great store by **The Trouble with Harry**, but **The Birds** abounds in just the kind of morbid whimsy that, in **Harry**, turns coy. **The Birds** was surely among his most formidable technical challenges, and Hitchcock rose to it with a master's unflustered ease. No film of his is quite so disorienting, either: the bird attacks are all the more menacing because Hitchcock regards them with such bemused detachment. I still remember with pleasure the first shock at the audacity and perfection of the final scene. — *Cocks*

Marnie (1964)
One of Hitchcock's darkest, strangest and most obsessive films — the story of a pathological thief (played with icy precision by Tippi Hedren) and the rich, powerful, sexy young man (Sean Connery) who is perverse enough to fall in love with her. Of course, says Hitchcock, the man's a pervert, and the relationship is deeply sadistic. Certainly the whole film has a demonic intensity one cannot rationally explain — it is one of Hitchcock's most beautiful, mysterious and profoundly personal movies. — *Taylor*

Torn Curtain (1966)
The logically cyclic structure is more than a neat classical frame: it defines at once the meaning and meaninglessness of political intrigue. The scientific mission is a treadmill to oblivion, and the film concentrates on the deepening of relationships through geographical displacement. As an experiment in natural lighting, too, it is a striking success. — *Spoto*

Topaz (1969)
This somber cold-war melodrama, set mainly in Cuba, is probably the most personal of the late Hitchcocks. The film trashes the right-minded Leon Uris novel that is its source and swallows up its large cast (Philippe Noiret and Michel Piccoli excepted) to present a cool tone poem in which the pro-U.S. patriots seem as contemptible as the pro-Russian heavies; what, after all, are we to make of a hero who sacrifices his wife and his lover in order to obtain information for the American government? At the film's end, tableaux of the movie's casualties are superimposed on a newspaper bearing the headline "Cuban Missile Crisis Over"; the newspaper is then discarded on a park bench — leaving little doubt that Hitchcock's cynical attitude toward the police extends to the international cops of the CIA, et al, as well. Short on story and resplendent with dark absurdity,

The ultimate twist is that there's no twist at all. Family Plot is very much mainstream Hitchcock.

Hitchcock. Four themes are especially prominent.

First, the link between theft and sex — comically described in **To Catch a Thief**'s Frances — is here focussed in the complex emotional responses of *another* Fran. Kidnapping and jewel theft make her feel strange and "tingly," and then sexually aroused. **Marnie** forged that same link dramatically in the association of kleptomania with pathological sexuality.

Second, there is the Hitchcock tradition of the search. The pursuit of a missing person, or the disclos rre of a hidden personality, was the important element in **The Thirty-Nine Steps, The Lady Vanishes, Spellbound, Vertigo, North by Northwest** and **Psycho**. Here, it is the search for Arthur Adamson — the unsuspecting Rainbird heir himself. Adamson is a kidnapper who "steals" people whose identities are so strong (a wealthy shipping magnate; a bishop) that they are worth great ransom. The irony is compelling: Adamson doesn't know that he has an identity that is worth very much more money than that he steals.

Third, Hitchcock gives further rein to his obsession with the theme of the influence of the dead on the living. The whole adventure is precipitated by Miss Rainbird's guilt ("I am seventy-eight years old and I want to go to my grave with a quiet conscience") and by the nightmares which trouble her. Her dead sister Harriet disturbs her sleep, "always whining and complaining" about the lost child Miss Rainbird forced her to give up. She is, in an important sense, the prime perpetrator of this family plot.

Detailed even more finely is the fourth theme, that of role-playing. As in **The Thirty-Nine Steps, Stage Fright, North by Northwest** and elsewhere, everyone is playing a role. In a story about the disclosure of a missing person's real identity, we follow here the activities of people who constantly assume false identities: Blanche is a fake medium; Lumley is an aspiring actor who plays roles ("McBride the lawyer") for her sake — much like Eve Gill in **Stage Fright** — but who is called a "real amateur" by Adamson's murderous accomplice Joe Maloney (Ed Lauter); Fran is forced by Adamson to wear disguises, and to assume the name of "The Trader" in her role as his aide; Adamson plays the role of a respectable jeweler.

Structurally, **Family Plot** is the purest film Hitchcock has given us since **Psycho**, and it is this rigorous structure and the lightness of tone that makes it unique among recent Hitchcock works. It begins and ends at night, and with a close-up of Blanche. The comparisons between the sets of couples (delineated below) are unfolded in precisely the same manner: first we are shown the female doing her part as a fake (Blanche as a medium, Fran as a tall blonde). Then their respective men are introduced — each in a lengthy dialogue in their automobiles (Lumley's taxi, Adamson's black sedan). And we move from the opening dialogue between Blanche and Lumley to the Fran/Adamson story as Fran is seen crossing a street, and is nearly hit by Lumley's taxi. The incident is perfectly cross-matched when he, approaching Adamson's house at the end, is nearly hit by a passing motorist. The run-away car sequence which nearly kills Blanche and Lumley is balanced structurally by the quick get-away Adamson and Fran make after kidnapping the bishop — each occurs in broad daylight (shades of the pursuing biplane in **North by Northwest**), each is physically threatening.

But perhaps the most interesting aspect of **Family Plot** is the way in which it contrasts couples. The startling coincidences which occur illuminate the psychological complexities and contrasts between Blanche and Lumley; Fran and Adamson; and Maloney and his wife. The film quickly establishes as its center of interest not the plot but these closely related characters.

The fundamental identification is that of Blanche and Adamson: both are motivated by greed; both force lovers to "go along" with sexual demands. Blanche and Adamson are also associated by her use of a crystal ball as a "cover," and by his use of the crystal chandelier as "cover." Furthermore, at a seance, Blanche talks of letting the veil part and allowing light to enter — just as Constantine (Nicholas Colasanto) described the ordeal in the basement prison, with light being let in through a narrow crack in the door. He also tells of the "disembodied voice" of a man heard through an intercom, and we are reminded of the voices that Blanche effects in her trances. But the kidnapper and the medium are also linked — as befits characters who are essentially thieves and manipulators — by an unseen person to whom they falsely relate themselves. Finally, the only homes we enter (except for Miss Rainbird's parlor) are those of Blanche and Adamson; Lumley and Fran,

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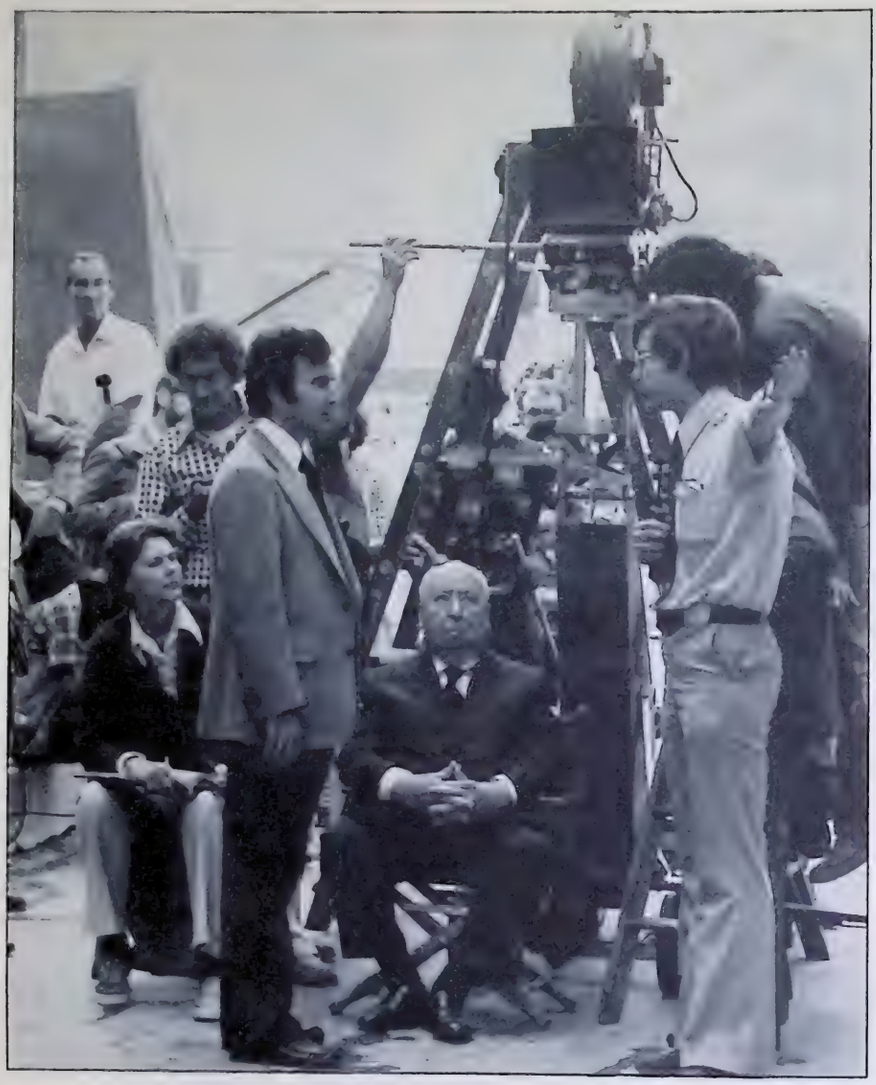


Hitchcock with part of his crew, on location, shooting ***Family Plot.***

whose identities derive from and are very much dependent on their lovers, are never seen in their own homes. (Fran is even deprived of a surname.) Even colors associate them throughout the film and in the final scene, Blanche fools Lumley into believing that she is really psychic — just as Fran was fooled about Adamson's "Edward Shoebridge" identity.

Despite its themes and structure, though, the film is really composed of skillfully assembled details: the kidnapping of the bishop and the drugging of Blanche, like the climactic and poetic passages of the film, are visually described by a brilliant montage of representative insert shots: a raised arm, an outstretched hand, feet scurrying on a floor, a needle jabbing a sleeved arm.

All these moments compensate for the film's minor technical flaw, the muddy blue-screen shots for the auto interiors. This unfortunate blemish was the fault not of Hitchcock's expert cinematographer, Leonard South, but of the optical department at Universal Studios, which consistently promised but never finally delivered a sufficiently corrected composite negative. (One wonders, with South, why the standard rear-projection device was not used.) Albert Whitlock's matte work for the burning of Maloney's auto, on the other hand, is virtually flawless.

In his most recent film, then, Alfred Hitchcock has demonstrated an energy and a style difficult for colleagues half his age to sustain. If the film lacks a locus for emotional identification, that is because the director chose a tone which precluded any rigorous identification technique. **Family Plot** is a work to be savored, not profoundly interiorized. In 1959, Hitchcock and Lehman both gave us **North by Northwest**, which is like a great, broad canvas. Their new film seems to have been undertaken with more modest pretensions. It is like a precious miniature.

Donald Spoto

This review is an abridged version of the concluding chapter in Mr. Spoto's forthcoming The Art of Alfred Hitchcock, *to be published this spring by Hopkinson and Blake.*

Topaz seems an apt nuclear-era companion piece to **The Trouble with Harry.** *— Rich*

Antonioni once said that he'd like to make a film where the audience followed a character around for a while until he passed a seemingly unimportant person on the street who would then become the centre of attention. Antonioni's never done it, but Hitchcock has twice: first in **Psycho** and then in **Topaz.** The scenario of **Topaz** resembles a relay race with new groups of characters picking up the story every twenty or thirty minutes. Despite this apparent loose construction the plot has the inexorability of a Greek tragedy. *— Medjuck*

Frenzy (1973)
Glossy, and notably inferior to **10 Rillington Place**, a modest telling of a similar tale. One does not watch the movie; one keeps an eye peeled for endless stylistic equivalents to H.'s initial in-the-flesh walk-on. The film-maker flatters himself as the audience flatters itself with facile moments of recognition. The breathtaking, horrifying tracking shot that descends from the door of the killer's apartment to the street outside trivializes the rest of the movie, contradicts it. This is the painting; everything else is the signature. *— Marcus*

Food is the central image in **Frenzy**, rape a perverted appetite: apples munched after rape/murders, bodies hidden in sacks of potatoes. Inspector Oxford even cops to it: "We've got to find him before his appetite is whetted again." But the reverse-angle is even more interesting. If *being* raped is having to eat something you don't want, consider the Inspector forcing down his wife's awful fish-head soup. It's no wonder Mrs. Oxford suspects the real rapist; she understands him all too well. (And we all have to eat, don't we?) *— Goodwin and Wise*

Frenzy

Hitchcock at Work

Hitchcock has often been quoted as saying that, for him, the actual shooting of a film is a pro forma matter: the real work of filmmaking takes place before shooting begins. Remembering this attitude we offer here (for the first time anywhere) a picture of Hitchcock at work. The following is an excerpt from a transcript of a production conference held during preparations for **Marnie**. The participants are: Hitchcock, Robert Boyle (set decorator for the film) and Evan Hunter, the writer who had worked with Hitchcock on his previous film, **The Birds**. (Jay Presson Allen is credited with the script for **Marnie**). — *eds.*

Mr. Hitchcock: The film is going to open with a girl, back view, going into a railroad station at Hartford, Connecticut. At present, I don't know what time of the day we can shoot it because we don't want it full of crowds because it may cover her up. The essential part is that we follow her back view into the station as she goes to the desk or booking office.

Evan Hunter: The ticket window. But Hitch, it should be on a Friday evening because she goes directly there from robbing the safe.

Mr. Hitchcock: Well, we needn't say it's Friday evening as long as we don't people it with too many people; we're going to have to put our extras in it anyway however we shoot it there. And she goes to the ticket window and buys a ticket. We still follow her into the station as she looks up and we go up to New York, you see. We go close enough to her to see the color of her hair, and finally she goes on to the platform down toward the train. Or it can be empty waiting for the train to come in. I don't know, we've got to look into that, you see or you can probably be going east to find out all this information for us. And we end up with a close shot on a rather bulky handbag under her arm. So that would constitute the first scene which we'll have to investigate whether we shoot it all in the station, whether we make a travelling plate of it or what is the best way to handle that, you see. I feel that we ought to cheat like they do in the Italian films and have nobody around if we can. Because otherwise we don't draw enough attention to the girl. The next sequence cuts immediately to an open safe and a crowd around it in an office. This would require an impression of an office, and maybe we can have one of those kind of offices with glass screens around it. So we get an impression of an office beyond, which we can either make as a backing or something because we needn't show too much activity or we can fake a set behind it. And the essence of this scene is that the safe has been robbed and there is a group of people. Mainly that constitutes the scene in which the manager or proprietor or the high official, whoever he may be, is known in the story as a Mr. Strutt, is the self-conscious figure who apparently gave this girl a job, without proper references and we indicate that he was obviously impressed by her other than her ability as a clerk or whatever she was, so he becomes a central guilty figure. So pictorially it's a Group Scene, you see.

Mr. Hunter: Also, it's an accounting firm, Bob.

Mr. Boyle: Wouldn't Hartford — would it be insurance? Probably would be insurance, wouldn't it?

Mr. Hunter: Well, we want it to be accounting because he comes in later on —

Mr. Hitchcock: He comes in later on in the story. This man is a very important figure, because he comes in, that's why we — the scene will be concentrated on this man and we read a complete picture of this man falling for the girl when he shouldn't have done. It's the chief cashier who's a girl — almost accuses him of having an affair with her — which he didn't. As we shall find later — but nevertheless he feels very guilty about the whole thing and he's right on the spot. There're police around and so forth, etc. Now, from that we continue the next

1

2

3

4

4A

4B

5

6

5A

6A

scene down a hotel corridor — still back view on the girl and she's now carrying a suitcase which is brand new, wrapped in brown paper and —

Mr. Hunter: Excuse me, may I break in here a minute — do we need to tell Bob what we need in the way of a physical thing in the office since *modus operandi*'s going to figure in this, you know. Her access to the safe.

Mr. Hitchcock: I don't think so.

Mr. Hunter: We don't?

Mr. Hitchcock: Not for our opening scene. As long as we show the safe as being robbed but our dialogue will tell us a lot there. Now in this next scene, following the office scene as I said, we're going down a corridor in a hotel and we can establish this as a hotel by possibly a clear — a floor weight or, I don't know, depends what type of hotel we use. I don't think it should be a big hotel. It should be a small hotel, rather cheesy. But we have to establish within this corridor what it is, you see.

Mr. Hunter: Not too cheesy, you know. Not like the 47th Street ones, off Broadway.

Mr. Boyle: Where are we in this hotel?

Mr. Hunter: New York City.

Mr. Boyle: New York City.

Mr. Hunter: But not a luxury hotel, either.

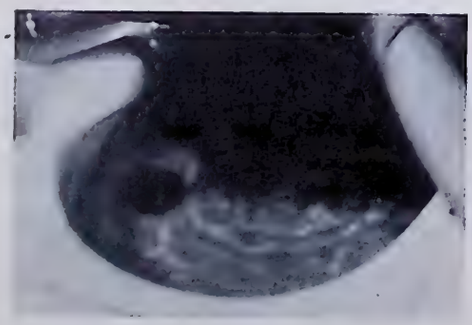
Mr. Hitchcock: No. And she finally goes into a room and there we see another suitcase, clothes on the bed, and now she tears the paper in which is the brand new suitcase and there are other boxes on the bed showing purchases, and the scene in this little bedroom constitutes her change of clothes and the cutting out of labels and so forth, you see, and then eventually we go and follow her into a bathroom and she goes round behind the door and by this time she's taken off probably part of her clothes and we hear the water go on and so forth and eventually we go into the bathroom and we just go to the head and we've never seen her face yet and right on the head down into the basin and we see the dark, very dark brown dye flowing out of the hair into the basin. And it just swirls around this dye — and for the first time she lifts her face. The hair is now blond and we see her face, for the first time. Now — we go then to Penn Station or a Greyhound station — have we decided...

Mr. Hunter: I think the bus terminal would be better. You know, we've had one railroad station —

Mr. Hitchcock: Whatever it is — it will probably be the bus terminal.

Mr. Hunter: The Port Authority Bus Terminal on, I think, it's 38th and 8th.

7



7A

Mr. Boyle: Not to leave the hotel room so soon — she has no reason. She's just trying to pick something that's a nonentity, isn't she? It's neither too poor or too rich. It's some lost hotel.

Mr. Hitchcock: Quality of the hotel — you're talking about the quality of the hotel?

Mr. Boyle: Well, yeah, I'm going back to the hotel. What kind of a hotel she would pick. Obviously, she has money, so she could live anywhere.

Mr. Hunter: Yes, but she doesn't want to call attention to herself, in any way, you see; she's going in there to change her indentity really.

Mr. Hitchcock: That's all she is — so that she would choose a very quiet hotel. Very quiet, very unobtrusive hotel. So you can debate this again, you know. A girl can get lost in the biggest hotel, just as well. You know, so that you see that there are many people up and down the corridors and the elevator and so forth, but...

Mr. Boyle: Yes, that's true.

Mr. Hitchcock: We could debate that, but we don't have to decide that finally now.

Mr. Boyle: Could be a business hotel.

Mr. Hitchcock: Like the New Yorker or the Commodore.

Mr. Boyle: People come and go all the time.

Mr. Hitchcock: As a matter of fact....

Mr. Boyle: Or the Biltmore across from...

Mr. Hitchcock: The way to establish

Marnie on Screen

Hitchcock, in the finished film, begins with the close-up of the bulky handbag (1), and then tracks back to reveal the establishing shot of the railroad station (2), thus combining two shots in one and setting up a vivid opening image. The open safe (3) is as he describes it, but the group scene that was supposed to follow has been refined: there are only two investigating officers, smirking because they know Strutt was taken in by a good-looking brunette. Shots of them are intercut with shots of Strutt (4A) to set them against him. At the end of the scene, Rutland comes in (4B).

There is no establishing shot of the hotel in New York, but the corridor shot is as described (5), except for the intruder at the end (5A). To the shot of the suitcases on the bed (6), Hitchcock has added an insert of Marnie's Social Security Card to identify her (6A). She washes her hair (7 and 7A). The scene in which she deposits the bag is as described (8) but Hitchcock has added a bit of business which graphically explains that she is dumping the bag, not simply checking it (8A). (9) establishes

You see, we've told the mystery of this girl in a series of images... That's why they're all very important; because they do make statements all the time.

that is to establish a facade of a hotel with so many windows, you know.

Mr. Boyle: Yeah.

Mr. Hitchcock: So, if you state that fact, you know, a mass of windows...

Mr. Boyle: The Commodore would be very good.

Mr. Hitchcock: The Commodore — Anyway. We can debate that afterwards. Now — the only reason I bring up the question, Evan, as to whether it should be a railroad station or bus station. Can you leave a suitcase there — for good? In the lockups, it's no good.

Mr. Boyle: Well, sure it is. Why not?

Mr. Hitchcock: Because they empty them every 24 hours.

Mr. Boyle: Well, what does she care what they do with it? It'll vanish from sight. She's going to throw the key away, anyway. So they'll take the bag out of the locker and take it someplace else. She's never going to claim it. What does she care?

Mr. Hitchcock: Right. Well, anyway this bus depot. She deposits the old bag. She arrives with two bags, you see. An old one and a new one. The old bag is deposited and then she goes to the bus with the new bag, you see. And the bus drives off. I think we're going to label it to Maryland, Laurel —

Mr. Hunter: Well, no, I play a scene where she buys a ticket. There's dialogue. At the window, she buys a ticket to Laurel, Maryland. And he tells her when the bus is leaving and when it's going to arrive and all that.

Mr. Hitchcock: On arriving at her destination there's a station wagon belonging to a hotel waiting for her at the destination, which we've got at present as...

Mr. Hunter: Laurel, Maryland.

Mr. Hitchcock: Laurel, Maryland, you see. This isn't final, you see. Laurel, Maryland, of course, is a well-known race track center and so forth. From here there's a station wagon waiting with the name of a hotel on the side. And she's driven....and we may have a couple of Establishing Shots of going through the countryside to establish we're in the country, you see. And then it eventually arrives at what we call the Old Colonial Hotel. This hotel has to have a bit of class about it, you know, it's where retired people can live, there are horse people. It's in — it should be a hotel within its own small grounds in this area and it should be related to racing, hunting, you know, that's the atmosphere that we take her into. Because don't forget we've got a strange mysterioso working for us. Because after all you've seen a girl who's a petty thief or a small thief changing her hair, clothes and so forth, and now she's arriving in completely contrapuntal surroundings — beautiful countryside and a rather smart or traditional hotel —

Mr. Hunter: And she's been here — you know — she's recognized here — she's been here many times before.

Mr. Hitchcock: Now we come into the lobby. The lobby of this hotel conveys the same quality. And when she goes to the desk a man carries her bag in and the woman clerk recognizes her immediately, addresses her by name and says 'your riding clothes came back a week ago' or something or yesterday or whatever we establish 'and they're in your room' or she asks, you know. We establish anyway she's left clothes there, which still sets up a mystery. And now she goes from there and we see her change — is that right?

Mr. Hunter: No, I think we should simply show her coming right into where the horse is kept.

Mr. Hitchcock: That's what I meant.

Mr. Hunter: Oh, I thought you meant showing her change.

Mr. Hitchcock: No, no, she goes upstairs and from there that indicates she's going upstairs to change and now we go right to the stables, where she arrives.

Mr. Hunter: This is another place now. It's not a part of the hotel grounds.

Mr. Hitchcock: That's why we might have to show the station wagon taking her there. So she might get out of the station wagon at some stables. Now, these stables should be — I think they're a type of stable where they train yearlings and other people are allowed to keep horses. This is very important to find out — what kind of stables this would be. She keeps a horse there. But it's vital to our story that she knows about the training of horses, especially race horses. And we have to get that over. You see, what happens now with a regularly trained race horse....it goes to stables from one meet to another, that's how it works out now. That, I found out — they don't go back to training

the street in Laurel, Md. and (10) takes us into the new hotel. The scene in which she approaches the horse is more complex than it is described since she arrives by car. It ends with the close-up of Marnie and the horse (11). She is next seen riding away (12), then comes the very important close-up of the hair blowing in the wind (12A), a fairly poor-quality process shot.

The establishing shot of the Baltimore street (13, 13A) with the huge ship at the end of the block is equally obvious. (14) gives us the "dowdy" livingroom of Marnie's mother (note the red gladiolae at left). This is an extended sequence not discussed in detail in the story conference, notable for the argument between Marnie and Mom that takes place in the kitchen which includes (15), a set-piece in which their hands touch juxtaposed with what look like baby bottles, and (16), the climax of the argument as a pie-ful of bright red strawberries crashes to the floor.

— Monaco

PHOTOS COURTESY OF JIM MONACO

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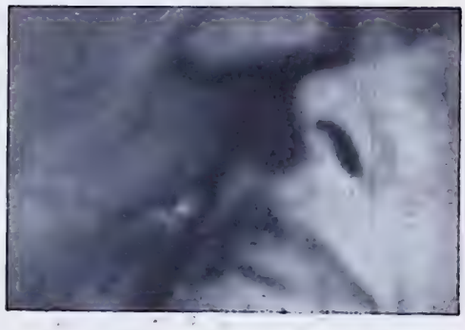
17A



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stables. In England they do. But they don't necessarily — once a horse has been trained — so this should be a training stable —

Mr. Boyle: And also a boarding stable.

Mr. Hunter: It's a boarding stable. She's not training a horse there, she's just boarding it.

Mr. Boyle: Exercise boys and people like that who work with the horses.

Mr. Hitchcock: And also they might — we might choose a place where they have a track — a training track.

Mr. Hunter: They would have.

Mr. Boyle: Or training rings, at least.

Mr. Hitchcock: Well, I know tracks where they have them out here in Northridge. Lot of these people have training tracks. Starting gate, schooling, what they call schooling, and so forth. Now — we show her riding, which calls for some beautiful landscapes and her riding in the distance on this horse. Not any particular way — around and so forth and then we go to Closeups, which will mean plates and things...for her Closeups showing her enjoying it and her hair blowing and it's very important that we establish here one big Closeup of the hair blowing and as she's riding —

Mr. Boyle: And come back to that.

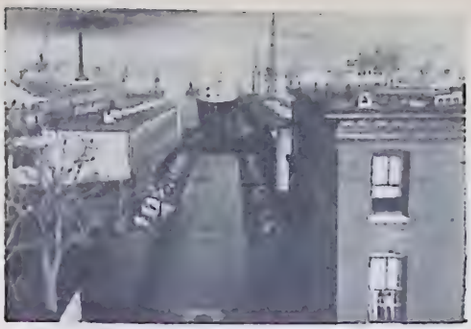
Mr. Hitchcock: And it's a motif, you see — it's a leitmotif that goes through the film. Again, it's going to be presented in such a way that you say, well I don't get this — we want to mystify the audience. The contrast between the thievery and the way she was dressed...quite modestly, as a clerk, and so forth, with this proprietary interest in this particular horse-riding thing she has. Now, from there we go to visit her mother. Her mother is going to live in Baltimore. In one of those streets where they have all those steps — you know — the whitewash steps? This again, is a tremendous contrast 'cause you see, we've practically shown, we've done all this cinematically — we've told the mystery of this girl in a series of images of pictures and settings and backgrounds. That's why they're all very important because they do make statements all the time. Now we get this cheesy, long Baltimore residential street. It's almost like a — you haven't been to Baltimore, have you? Well, it's like the north of England street — just the same — oh yes, just like the north of England. Rows of houses and chimneys but the one feature of Baltimore is that people take great pride in their steps cause all the houses have one step up from the sidewalk. And they're always done with pumice stone or whitewashed or painted white. You get this vista of all these steps, you see, and she drives down this street, maybe in a taxi...

Mr. Hunter: If we can, Bob, if we can get it near the water someplace....

Mr. Hitchcock: What would be nice if at the end of the street we could see masts of ships 'cause this is very important later on. And they do have them, there're probably streets around there with this terribly sordid atmosphere — the saloon at the corner and the ships down at the bottom. And the taxi stops and she gets out. Then, you know, opens the door — or the door's opened for her. Now she's in her mother's home, which is pretty...it has to be the size of the real house — quite small, narrow passage, the sitting room in the front and the one story up to the bedrooms, staircase up in the hallway. There, of course, we have the scene where she meets her mother and the little woman who looks after her. And we play the whole scene — and the girl's familiar with the place and there'll be a kitchen required.

Mr. Hunter: This should be a pretty dowdy place.

Mr. Hitchcock: Oh, it will be dowdy. Bob, we'll eventually get the photographs of the real interior there. That'll all be done. We'll get all that. But the external atmosphere is very important, to show



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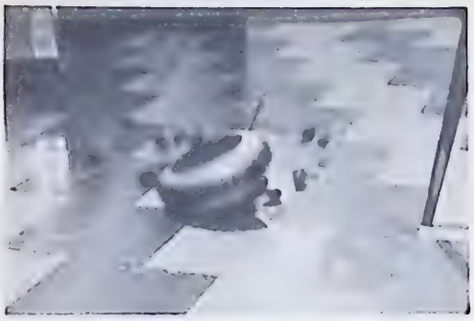

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again, the contrast of the riding and she's now in a nice suit, not too showy but fairly conservative and she's blond. And she goes in and now we introduce the mother and now something of her — the fact that she brings gifts to them and that she works for a millionaire and her mother believes her. We characterize her mother as a cautious woman....

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"Suspense: anxious uncertainty." Webster's Dictionary

Cary Grant, Ingrid Bergman. ***Notorious****, 1946.*

A Letter from Ingrid Bergman

I can tell you, which I am sure the other actors have already told you, that Hitch is a magnificently prepared director. There is nothing that he does not know about the picture he is going to do. Every angle and every set-up he had prepared at home with a small miniature set of what is being built in the studio. He does not even look into the camera — as he says "I know what it looks like". I don't know any other director that works this way. Of course he wants it primarily his way, but if an actor has some ideas he is, however, willing to let the actors try them. He will listen and sometimes I thought I had made myself clear and that Hitch was going to change his set-up. But, as a rule, he used to get his way by simply saying — "If you can't do it my way, fake it". It was a very good lesson for me, as many times when I can not win a battle with a director, I would remember Hitch saying: "Fake it". His humour and his sharp wit are a delight. He likes, I think, very real people and if somebody on a set would be a phoney he was able to start a double-talk and drove these people slightly out of their mind, because Hitch's dialogue in the conversation sounded absolutely right, but somehow it was not. There was always some twist that you could not understand. That is how he very often got rid of visitors that he did not want to be disturbed by while he was working.

One period in Hitchcock's career was very difficult to follow. He wanted to shoot a whole roll of film which was 11 minutes and which meant we had to rehearse a whole day without shooting and then shoot the scene the following day. It made everybody very nervous, but he insisted in two movies — **Rope**, and the movie with me, **Under Capricorn**. However, he had to add some close-ups because we were unable to remove furniture and walls fast enough for his camera to come through.

My happiest experience with Hitch was **Notorious** — a wonderful suspense story, where he could use many of his fabulous tricks, such as shooting a crowd of people from way up near the ceiling, coming down into a close-up of a key that was in my hand. He also managed to produce the longest kiss in those days. As the censorship forbade a kiss to be more than a certain amount of seconds, he managed — in a telephone scene with Cary Grant and me — to make it look like a long kiss, but we kept moving and talking, so that the seconds were always interrupted. However, this scene became quite famous, because of its audacity.

I am sure that every actor who has ever worked with Hitchcock would like to work with him again.

Ingrid Bergman has just completed filming in Rome of Vincente Minnelli's **A Matter of Time**. *In which she stars with Liza Minnelli and Charles Boyer.*

How He Does It

by Michael Tarantino

The French would say that the films of Alfred Hitchcock are constructed with "découpage classique". This scene from **North by Northwest**, which sets the stage for the cross-country chase to follow, is a masterpiece in economical expression. It is typical of his style in that each formal element is introduced primarily to advance the narrative. There are no Wellesian camera angles. In practice, the editing is the antithesis of Eisensteinian montage — although in theory the use of parallel cutting is similar. The lighting is functional rather than decorative and the camera movement is sparse. Yet, within twenty-nine shots, running a total of three minutes and fifty-four seconds, the scene provides the kind of emotional impact of which Hitchcock is the master.

The majority of the elements used in this scene act subliminally upon an audience. You can grasp the emotional thrust of the action without realizing many of the strategies involved in evoking that reaction. The components are meticulously organized.

The operative word with regard to this scene is "re-inforcement". Throughout, certain thematic and structural motifs will be emphasized. References give rise to audience premonitions and reverberate through to the scene's conclusion. A seemingly innocent prop or banal decoration may be transformed into a dark reminder of the violence that lurks in the corners. For example, in shot 6, Roger Thornhill is talking to the receptionist and rubbing his hands together nervously. In the right corner, there is visible a pair of black-gloved hands, belonging to a woman we saw in the beginning of the shot. In shot 13b, the camera pans to Valerian, Thornhill's pursuer, who is standing in a doorway. He also is putting on a pair of black gloves. In shot 23, after murdering Townsend, the man Thornhill has come to see, Valerian runs out of the frame, and the last thing we see is his black hand.

Another example: in shot 13b, there is a wooden sculpture of a headless woman's body positioned to the right of Valerian. When he walks out of the frame in shot 15, the sculpture is all that remains, prominent against a white background. In shots 17,19, and 21 the sculpture is again visible

Michael Tarantino has an M.A. in Film Studies from New York University, works for the New York State Council on the Arts, and has written for Sight and Sound *and* Take One, *among other magazines.*

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13B

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in the background, this time between Thornhill and Townsend. In the latter part of shot 23 the object occupies the frame along with the killer's gloved hand. Throughout, the sculpture is closely identified with the space occupied by Valerian. Even when he is not visible, it reminds us that he is not far beyond the edge of the frame.

One further example of how Hitchcock repeats motifs to arouse our expectations is the photographer who is lining up pictures behind Thornhill and Townsend (shot 16). His flash bulb goes off twice, and although well behind Townsend, casts a bright light on his back. Later, in shot 22, as the two main characters face the camera, the sculpture is lined up directly in back of Townsend's head. This time the flash does not go off. Instead, the frame blurs and he is dead. When the flash was functioning, it anticipated the area where the knife would hit. In not going off, it triggers a reaction that something is amiss. (In addition, the flash also punctuates the act. After the murder (shot 27) the photographer steps from the background into the foreground of the shot and starts to snap his flash at Thornhill, who will be accused of the crime.)

These are only three examples of the many thematic elements which are re-inforced in the scene. At the same time, there are a number of structural "blocks" which are repeated. In addition to providing a rhythmical intensity, this strategy gives the impression that the climax is mathematically ordained. Thornhill's arrival outside the United Nations is paralleled with Valerian's. There are two shots of the plaza, three shots of Thornhill talking with receptionists, and two reaction shots after the murder. The shot-countershot sequence between Thornhill and Townsend (shots 17-21) is contrasted with the shots of Valerian standing at the doorway. Each unit is a part of a certain block of shots and each block swiftly advances the narrative, e.g., the shots of Valerian's arrival following Thornhill's (shots 1-4,7-9) indicating the temporal distance between them.

The two examples of camera movement in the scene act upon the static shots which precede them like the blocks do in the way they condition an audience's attitude towards the action. The classically controlled shot-countershot sequence points to the camera tracking backwards after the knifing. It is the space which this movement reveals which implicates Thornhill. Earlier, in shot 13, the camera pans from Thornhill to track in on Valerian. As the first camera movement in the scene, this shot takes on an ominous aspect, linking the two characters spatially — thus justifying Thornhill's paranoia. Hitchcock never wastes a track or a pan; if his camera moves, there's a reason for it.

A good number of other patterns also reinforce the scene's symmetry.The repetitive strains of Bernard Herrmann's score punctuated by periods of silence; the syncopation of intercutting shots of a longer duration (over twenty seconds): e.g. shot 24, with shots lasting only a few seconds: e.g. shots 23,25, and 26; the intensity achieved without the use of one close-up... each and every element helps to form our overall reaction. It is noteworthy that these components accompany the action rather than impinge upon it. Many of the visual gracenotes appear on the edges of the frame. In an immediate sense, their effect is subtle. Cumulatively, it is staggering. The last shot, a model shot from a vantage point high atop the UN, shows Thornhill fleeing the scene. Suddenly the action has burst outside and reduced the players to miniatures — the last line in a statement conceived by one of the cinema's ultimate craftsmen.

More photos on next page

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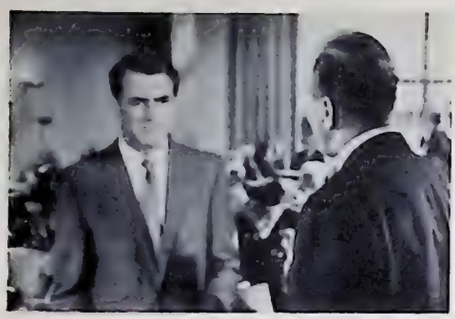
Within twenty-nine shots, this scene provides the kind of emotional impact of which Hitchcock is the master.



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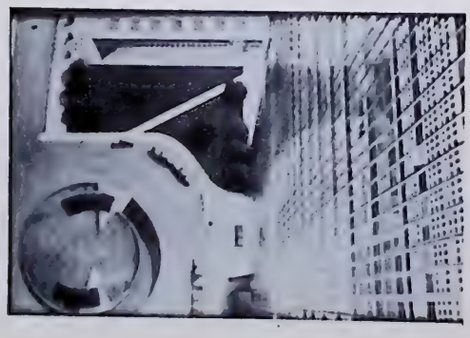

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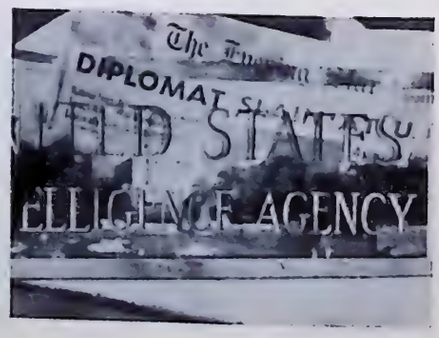
It's only a dissolve, Ingrid!

The textbooks all tell you a dissolve is simply a punctuation device, right? Maybe in the hands of lesser filmmakers, but when Hitchcock dissolves, more than just time passes. This throwaway sequence from **North by Northwest** begins where the sequence on this page leaves off, with the towering overhead model shot of the U.N. building which segues (A) into a simple establishing shot (B) which in turn gives way (C) to a newspaper headline (D). But take a closer look at this nonchalant transition and you notice the moral symbolic equivalences as the glistening, icy stamp of the "United States Central Intelligence Agency" first imposes itself on its creature the U.N., then reflects the Capitol (in

A



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Sreekumar Menon

fact, *super*imposes itself over the seat of government), then gives birth to the front-page headline for Tuesday, November 25, 1959. "Diplomat Slain at U.N." says the banner over the picture of Thornhill we have just seen shot. "Assassin Eludes Police Efforts," the bank declares. A little closer study reveals other truths however. The dissolve "reads," "Diplomat Slain... Intelligence Agency." And other headlines on the front page inform us (it's only accidental, of course!):

"National Fears Tieup,"

and

"Nixon Promises West Will Remain in Berlin"

Hmmn. . . .

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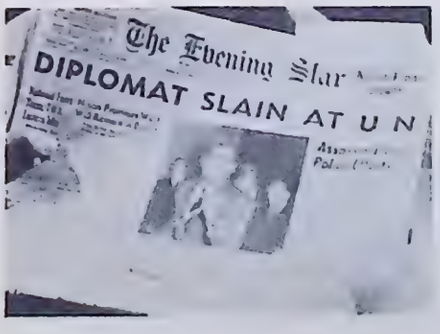

D

continued from page 41

scene. Can you imagine that?"

If Herrmann was comparing my film to **Psycho** maybe he liked it.

"But let's talk about the music while the film is fresh in my mind," continued Herrmann.

Fine, I replied, and launched into a eager 10-minute explanation of why I didn't want any title music. The first scene in **Sisters** is a long set-up shot from a hidden camera in a bathhouse changing room. The partition separating the women's room from the men's has been removed. Over the scene of a blind girl undressing I wanted to fade in and fade out four titles with the primary screen credits . . . to make the credits short without any dramatic music. After I finished, Herrmann exploded.

"No title music? Nothing horrible happens in your picture for the first half an hour. You need something to scare them right away. The way you do it, they'll walk out."

"But, in **Psycho** the murder doesn't happen until 40 . . ."

"You are not Hitchcock! He can make his movies as slow as he wants in the beginning! And do you know why?"

I shook my head.

"Because he is Hitchcock and they will wait! They know something terrible is going to happen and they'll wait until it does. They'll watch your movie for 10 minutes and then they'll go home to their televisions."

Herrmann was brutal and, of course, right.

"What do you think we should do?" I asked.

"I will write you one title cue, 80 seconds long. It will keep them in their seats until your murder scene. I got an idea using two Moog synthesizers."

Oh, my god, I thought wildly. Herrmann the 61-year-old master of suspense music is going to write his first pop title song. Gone with the old Herrmann and on with the Now Herrmann. Needless to say I was wrong because, as I was to learn later, the reason Herrmann music had gone out of fashion was precisely because he refused to write songs.

When in the early '60s the record business became bigger than the film business it became a must for film scores to contain a hit single (**The Graduate** — "Mrs. Robinson"; **Easy Rider** — "The Ballad of Easy Rider"; and **Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid** — "Raindrops Keep Falling on My Head" are some examples of this trend). Suddenly, song writers became sought-after film composers. But Herrmann adamantly refused to change to meet this new trend, and after a ferocious battle with a studio head ("I don't write songs! I write film music!"), he left Hollywood. He moved to England where he scored two Truffaut films — **Farenheit 451** (1966) and **The Bride Wore Black** (1967). After that came one Holland/German co-production entitled **Obsessions** (1969), an overblown Yugoslavian/West German/Italian period piece called **The Battle of the River Neretva** (1969), and two low-budget English suspense films — **Night Digger** (1970) and **Endless Night** (1971). But as far as Hollywood was concerned, after **Psycho**, Herrmann was "washed up," "dead"!

A few months later, after our first meeting, we met again in a recording studio in London. I was elated to see Bernard Herrmann was alive and well. For as I entered the recording booth and looked out onto the studio floor, there he was on the podium, standing over a full orchestra, berating the two young men on his left who were frantically trying to get two Moog synthesizers in tune with the rest of the orchestra.

"We can't wait any longer. We'll play it without them," Herrmann grumbled.

"Please, Mr. Herrmann," pleaded one of the young men, "It will just take a second."

"You said that five minutes ago and still we wait! It's an undisciplined instrument and should not be allowed in the orchestra."

The room filled with unearthly squeals as the Moogs reeled through the scales in search of the right key. Finally, the two young men managed to settle them down into a shrill sound.

"That's good enough. Let's try it!"

Herrmann raised his baton and the orchestra sprang to attention. He looked up at the large time clock overhead, counted eight beats, and jerked his baton down. The Moogs wailed out and I got that same chill I'd had in the editing room a few months before. Herrmann had done it again. He was right. I couldn't leave my seat.

Remembering Herrmann

by Brian de Palma

It had been a "freaky" day. The actors standing around the set of the suspense movie I was directing, called **Sisters**, were Eddie the giant, Sealo the flipper man, Tina the lobster child, the alligator woman, six sets of twins, and one set of tap-dancing triplets. They were assembled for the film's dream sequence in which the Siamese sisters (the movie's heroines) recall their childhood in a Canadian institution for the malformed.

With these strange images still in my mind, I entered the cutting room late that night.

The editor, Paul Hirsch, had been cutting the film during the shooting and wanted to show me the murder scene, accompanied by some music off an old record. I had seen the scene in rough cut before but had been unsatisfied. The aesthetic problem of slashing a victim to death had been effectively solved only once — in the shower murder in Hitchcock's **Psycho**. My murder paled in comparison, and having once failed at this same problem in an earlier feature (an ice pick in the eye — a blatant compromise for shock rather than craft), I was determined not to fail again.

Paul threaded up the viewer, turned off the lights, and switched on the machine. As Dominique — the mad sister — raised her knife and jerked it down into the victim's groin, I was jolted to hear that extraordinary shriek of violins from the **Psycho** shower murder. Suddenly a scene I had viewed 20 times before took on new visceral dimensions. Bernard Herrmann's music had breathed a new emotional force into my film. It immediately brought back the twisted faces of the freaks. Just as they presented a disfigurement of human form, Herrmann's massed violins played a chilling distortion of a human cry. I inhaled sharply and 30 seconds later realized I hadn't exhaled. My stomach muscles tightened and my skin prickled with fear.

"You've got to get Herrmann to do the score," said Paul triumphantly. "See the difference it makes?"

Brian de Palma's most recently-completed film is ***Obsession*** (starring Genevieve Bujold and Cliff Robertson), which is blessed with (as De Palma puts it) Bernard Herrmann's "last great romantic score". A previous film, ***Phantom of the Paradise,*** *is currently being re-released (with a new ad campaign) to terrific box-office. De Palma is currently shooting* ***Carrie*** *for United Artists. This article first appeared in* The Village Voice *in October 1973 and is Copyright © B. De Palma.*

Herrmann at work

Bernard Herrmann died late in December of last year just as he was finishing the score for Martin Scorsese's **Taxi Driver**. His last score, remarkably, is one of his best: subtle, forceful, and sophisticated in the style that Herrmann made famous in the forties when most movies were characterized by the insistent, overblown, symphonic programmatic music of the likes of Max Steiner and Erich Wolfgang Korngold.

Taxi Driver itself is a film that vividly recalls late-forties film noir and Herrmann's late-bop jazz theme for the film is perfectly supportive of the mood. It's one of those highly melodic, moody, almost lugubrious downbeat pieces that are so closely associated with the period, the urban locale, and the lowlife characters who scurry around in it. Herrmann varies the instrumentation from scene to scene, starting off with strings, focusing on alto sax solos at crucial points, often backing up the alto with a soulful bass, sometimes commenting on the proceedings with a section of typically muted trumpets. Under the mood-setting credit sequence at the beginning he uses some electronic instrumentation, and there are occasional **Psycho**-tic riffs, as well.

Taxi Driver is dedicated to the memory of Bernard Herrmann.

Monaco

I nodded. Herrmann is part of film history. His first feature was **Citizen Kane** (1940). He was scoring the greatest film ever made the year I was born.

"Sure," I said cynically, "but he's probably dead."

"Are you sure?" Paul asked.

"Look, I don't have his dates, but the last movie I remember him doing was **The Birds** and that was 10 years ago."

Paul was not to be swayed. While I completed shooting **Sisters**, he researched Herrmann and discovered that he was very much alive and living in London. In fact, Herrmann had just recently completed a score for a Hayley Mills film called **Twisted Nerve**. Finally Ed Pressman, **Sisters**, producer, contacted his agent through a friend's optometrist's brother. In a phone conversation, Ed explained the story of **Sisters** and was instructed by Herrmann's agent to send the script. A few weeks later, Ed was informed that Herrmann was interested and the financial arrangements were negotiated. (Herrmann's score was the most expensive item in the **Sisters** budget). Ed came down to the set late one afternoon and told us that the rumors were true: Bernard was going to write the **Sisters** score and planned to come to New York when the film was cut. I could hardly believe that the genius who had scored **Vertigo**, **North by Northwest**, and **Psycho** was really going to write our music. I held my excitement in and waited to see.

That day finally came and still my faith that the mythical Herrmann would emerge from an elevator at the Movielab screening room to see my movie was faint. I was right only about one thing — he didn't emerge from the elevator. Rather, when we came off the elevator at 10 a.m. he was waiting for us. He was a short, stout man, with silver gray hair plastered down his head, thick glasses, and he carried an ominous-looking walking stick. Ed apologized for being late (we weren't) and asked how his flight had been. Herrmann impatiently mumbled, oh, all right, but I'm staying on London time and all I want to do is see the film, have dinner and go to bed. I got the impression there was something unpleasant about New York time and, in fact, about everything New York, including ourselves. But I wasn't sure because I couldn't see Herrmann's face (he never looked up at us, keeping his head straight down, his eyes never leaving the floor) to determine if he was kidding us or not. Undaunted, Ed launched into an

I could hardly believe that the genius who had scored Vertigo, North by Northwest, and Psycho was really going to write our music.

apology for the present rough state of the film.

Herrmann's impatience broke into anger.

"I flew here not to talk about the film but to see it!" he shouted, waving his cane like an enraged Mr. Magoo. "For God's sake — let's get on with it!"

Herrmann with John Barbirolli in 1940

As I came to learn later, no matter how loud or brutally frank Herrmann was, he was almost invariably right. And if you disagreed with him about anything, you'd have to weather the blast. But then if you had a good point, he would subside and begrudgingly come around to your point of view.

Here, of course, Herrmann was right, and without another word we filed into the darkened screening room and started the picture.

For 10 minutes the screening seemed to be going along all right (at least he wasn't shouting at us), but then the first music cue arrived. On the screen, Danielle, the good sister, and her black lover embraced on the deck of the Staten Island Ferry. As they kissed, the room was filled with Herrmann's own love theme from Hitchcock's **Marnie**. It was a beautiful moment.

"What's that!" shrieked Herrmann with unbelievable horror.

"That's where the first music cue is," I frantically explained. "I just wanted to show you the type of music I had in mind for this sequence. . . "

"Stop it," he cried, his cane thumping the floor in rage.

"But I thought. . . "

"You thought!" he rasped contemptuously. "That's **Marnie**, not your movie!"

"But **Marnie's** perfect," I argued.

"Turn it off," he ordered. "I don't want to hear **Marnie** when I'm looking at your movie. How can I think about anything new with *that* playing?" By this time, his feet had joined his drumming cane and I feared for his heart. But fortunately Paul had raced around to the projection booth and switched the accursed music off. Momentarily mollified, Herrmann collapsed back into his chair to watch the rest of the film.

As I stole looks at Herrmann during the screening, I wondered if ours was a doomed collaboration. I had thought that pre-scoring the film with Herrmann music (**Marnie** for the love scenes, **Psycho** for the murder, **Vertigo** for the dream sequence) would be helpful to him. Wrong! And in the process I had painfully learned that Herrmann's wrath is unmerciful on bad judgment. It reminded me of working with Orson Welles. He, too, berated you for what he considered bad judgment. But the difference between Herrmann and Welles was that Herrmann passionately cared that what was decided was right and threw his whole being into it; Welles knew just as well as Herrmann what was right — he had just given up fighting for it.

When the film was over, silence ensued. After what seemed an eternal pause Herrmann started to reminisce. He wasn't shouting now.

"I remember sitting in a screening room after seeing the rough cut of **Psycho**. Hitch was nervously pacing back and forth, saying it was awful and that he was going to cut it down for his television show. He was crazy. He didn't know what he had. Wait a minute, I said, I have some ideas. How about a score completely for strings. I used to be a violin player, you know . . . Hitch was crazy then. You know he made **Psycho** with his own money and was afraid it was going to be a flop. He didn't even want any music in the shower

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James Stewart on Alfred Hitchcock

"There is always such discipline on a Hitchcock set, he is always so completely prepared for what he wants to do, that he makes the job of directing look easy, and that makes the job of acting seem easy too. Some people suppose that he must have a bad reputation with actors, because of some of the provocative things he has said. But actually I don't remember hearing any bad tales of him before I worked with him. I think the interview in which Hitch said that he considered actors cattle he gave after **Rope**. Maybe I was the first head of cattle he had! I don't see how the reputation, if he has such a reputation, for being bad to actors came about. I have never worked with anyone who was more considerate, more helpful, more understanding of actors than Hitchcock. He expects you to know your job and do it. He has no patience with people who insist on a sort of group analysis of a scene before, or a long private conversation with Hitchcock about a line or a certain feeling the actor may or may not have. This sends Hitchcock right up the wall. He expects a lot of actors, he expects them to know their job, he expects them to take the direction he gives, to use the talent they are being paid for, and they're supposed to have, to interpret that and put it on the screen.

If there is some genuine problem for an actor Hitch can be very helpful. I remember Kim Novak, whom I like very much and think is an excellent actress, had never worked with Hitch before **Vertigo**. At one point Kim came up, early in the shooting of the film, and said "Mr Hitchcock, in this scene I don't feel that Madeleine, the way she's written here, shows that she's engrossed enough in the relevant aspects of the scene itself. Perhaps to show a little more vigour in the writing..." And Hitch said "Kim, this is only a movie. Let's not go too deeply into these things. It's only a movie." Now I don't say that he has not gone more deeply into things beforehand, in his preparation. But he takes the responsibility for all that off the actor's shoulders. He immediately put Kim Novak at ease, she relaxed and never again questioned anything throughout the whole movie. And of course she was just fine.

But it's hard for me to imagine anyone not being able to get along with him, and vice versa. He is so completely prepared, and knows so completely what he wants, and what he wants is so completely on the nose in relation to the story he wants to tell, so totally reasonable for the actor. He has this absolute fetish about telling a story visually, he has very little respect for the spoken word, and these are all good things for an actor to have, because he occupies himself with his sphere, and leaves the actor completely free in his. He will tell you what effect he wants a particular scene or moment or line to have on the audience, and then leave it up to you to make it your own way. He isn't about to baby anybody through a role; he is a professional and expects to work with professionals. But when you come down to it, that is the best and most valuable sort of respect an actor can receive."

Hitchcock: The Best of the Earliest

by Maurice Yacowar

The only thing wrong with Hitchcock's early films is that he went on to make his later films. The success of his thrillers of the mid-thirties drove into oblivion the masterful work he did in the silent film. These British successes were in turn superceded by his American thrillers, which in turn were replaced in the critical mind by the brilliant period covered in Robin Wood's classic study, from **Strangers on a Train** through **Marnie.**

Hitchcock could have retired to a life as a gourmet cook in 1929 and still have been regarded as one of the shaping masters of cinema. Had he done so, we would be showing **The Ring, The Farmer's Wife** and **The Manxman** in our film history courses, with the Langs and Von Sternbergs, certainly ahead of the Clarence Browns. As it is, Hitchcock study is for **The Birds** and the early films are assigned to the legions of the great unwatched. Hitchcock is his own worst rival.

So here's a far-from-exhaustive attempt to suggest the variety of delights to be found in the early Hitchcock (say, before the first **The Man Who Knew Too Much**), dealing with 'moments' to remember, rather than with the larger strategies of the structure of the films or their themes.

The Pleasure Garden (1925)
Hitchcock's previous career as a cartoonist and titlist reveals itself in his title sequence. In the lower corner a girl dances in a spotlight — solo, manic, frantic — with neither partner nor audience. The image articulates to the mad visions the men have in their deliria later, and to the counter-romantic deflations throughout the film. So there is no passion in the lives of the girls trying out for parts in "Passion Flowers". The lurid promise of one title, "What Every Chorus Girl Knows", following a starlet's come-hither smile to her manager, is deflated by the next shot, of the girls washing their nylons in Lux. The "Pleasure Garden" of showbiz is neither a pleasure nor a garden, but a soporific imitation of the jungle essence that provides the setting for the second half of the film and that brings the central couple to self-knowledge and weary hope for romance. Hitchcock's juxtaposition of the city girl waving a sleeved good-bye to her hubby, with the native girl waving him a bare-skinned hello anticipates precisely the complex of X-imagery in **Strangers on a Train.**

Downhill (1927)
In a scene of remarkable erotic lassitude, our hero works as a gigolo in a dance-hall. One woman straddles her chair while her foppish man fondles his cigarette holder. Muscles and mustache mar the woman (Violet Farebrother) who wants to take the hero away from all that. The film has a number of fine delirium montages, as Hitchcock strives to blend images of the physical reality into an intense representation of a state of mind.

Easy Virtue (1927)
A couple's discussion of their possible marriage is conducted over the phone; we watch the changing moods, shifting currents of will, in the discussion as they register on the eavesdropping switchboard operator. Hitchcock is up to his typical cleverness in narrative technique, true, but, in a film about the callous meddling of family, press and strangers in a private life, the touching sympathy and interest of the switchboard operator make an im-

Maurice Yacowar teaches film at Brock University, St. Catharines, Ontario, and reviews films for the St. Catharines Standard. *He is completing a book on Hitchcock's British films, on a research grant from the Canada Council.*

Hodges on Hitch

Taking a shower hasn't been the same for me since 1960. Those close to me have cause to be grateful for the prevalence of bathtubs in these islands.

Let me take you back to a foggy night in London town just sixteen years ago. I and hundreds of others shuffled, two by two, around the Wood Green Odeon. Cinemas were big in those days; vast and usually empty cenotaphs to a dying industry. But this night was the exception. Here was more than a full house hoping to get inside. We shivered with anticipation; even normal events took on a sinister edge. The cashier curled her waxed red lips. Rouged cheeks quivered like birthday blancmanges as she depressed the hidden button. Two tickets slithered like a cobra's tongue towards my hand.

Inside, hushed patrons took their seats as if attending an execution; their own. Four Jack-the-lads entered laughing. Laughing? Jesus Christ, didn't they realise what they were in for? Hadn't they read last month's *Picturegoer* or the review in *News of the World* ('All human life is here'.)? White-faced I watched as they turned into my row and roughly pulled down their seats. Turning to face the puce-lit stage I felt sure that Mr. Hitchcock would soon put them in their place. House lights dimmed. Curtains parted. A British Board of Censors' Certificate jumped on the screen. The film title, as always, was filled in like a pupil's name on a school exercise book, in longhand, neat, innocent and spelling PSYCHO. Within thirty minutes, I, and the rest of the audience, were gibbering together; our arses jerked out of stained red plush seats together. We broke sweat together, and muttered CALL THE POLICE together. FOR GOD'S SAKE DON'T GO UP THERE! When Arbogast DID, we went through the roof together. How PAVLOV would have laughed. The DOG was out of the MANGER.

Home again, and still shaken, I couldn't go to the john without a friend standing outside the open door. Even then I kept whistling. I slept alone, I don't know how; bed against the wall, light on, attempting the impossible with one eye open. For days my hair at the back wouldn't lie down.

That's how I had hoped to remember the avuncular Mr. Hitchcock. That was before the French began to drown the poor man in academic eyewash: before the literary ticks inflated his reputation beyond the point of explosion, before I was told I had been played like an organ and that Mr. Hitchcock's love of film was more important to him than any considerations of morality. Till then, for me, he had simply been a director who could tell a good yarn. Oh balmy, innocent days.

The fly at the end of **Psycho** flew on and landed in the ointment. My children, who had always loved swimming in the sea, now don't. And I'm off baths. Is personal hygiene worthy of moral consideration?

Mike Hodges

Mike Hodges is the English director and writer of ***Suspect, Rumour, Get Carter, Pulp*** *and* ***The Terminal Man.***

Hitchcock could have retired to a life as a gourmet cook in 1929 and still have been regarded as one of the shaping masters of cinema.

portant point, just as the volume of anti-snooping remarks made in **Rear Window** is balanced by the one lady's indignant reflections on the death of her dog.

The Ring (1927)
In Hitchcock's best delirium montage, the voices and the sounds that the hero hears are bodied forth as visible things. We see the sounds, as the hero's vague fears about his wife's loyalty appear to him to materialize. From his heat the piano keys seem to melt and dance wildly in his head.

The Farmer's Wife (1928)
Hitchcock's funniest comedy before **The Trouble With Harry** has a similar basic structure: a man innocently upsets an entire community, this time not by dying (as Harry Warp did) but by trying to find a new wife. Each proposal proves worse than futile, disruptive. The funniest is the scene with mousey Thirza, which ends with the suitor raging, the lady whimpering, the maid bawling, and trays of ices melted and slopping all over the floor. The comic climax is Thirza's tea-party, where the hero infuriates his next lady, and his servant (Gordon Harker) struggles manfully to catch the fainted hostess without dropping his pants. The film provides a brilliant image of social harmony and personal complacency shattered by the hero's innocent attempt to fit back into the romantic community.

The Manxman (1929)
In Hitchcock's most striking use of natural landscape, the heroine's marriage to the fisherman is associated with the rocky shores of the island, oppressive, infertile, and an image of her bleak enislement. Her love for the lawyer is associated with the fields and open spaces. Six shots of remarkable composition herald the fisherman's return by framing the lovers — first individually, then together — under the huge rock. A dissolve from the ripples of the girl's suicide leap into the water, to the inkwell from which her lover, the judge, will draw her sentence, anticipates the eye-to-drain dissolve in **Psycho.**

Blackmail (1929)
The first British sound feature is a film about sound, about the uncommunicative tendencies of speech. Hitch jokes about the cinema's quest for novelty. The shadow that gives the first victim the appearance of a melodramatic mustache is famous, so I won't mention it; but it has a little-known parallel. When the heroine resolves to confess her guilt she rises into another shadow, a noose around her neck. In both cases the point is how easily our senses can mislead us; further: there

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Hitchcock in 1976. By François Truffaut

[*Hitchcock/Truffaut*, the book of interviews François Truffaut first published (with the collaboration of Helen Scott) in 1966, has been instrumental in legitimizing Hitchcock's reputation on this side of the Atlantic during the last ten years. The occasion of a new French edition of this seminal book, which has become required reading in hundreds of film courses around the country, affords Truffaut an opportunity to update his portrait of his portly subject. Herewith, translated, the preface to the new edition, to be published this spring by Seghers. Copyright © 1976 François Truffaut. — *eds.*]

François Truffaut's most recent film is ***Argent de Poche*** *© (Pocket Money).*

Ever since my first trips to America, where I'd gone to show my films, I had been surprised and shocked by the condescension with which American film critics wrote about Hitchcock's work. In 1960, the New York Film Critics Circle had given their annual prize to William Wyler's **Ben Hur**, even though it seemed to me more properly to belong to **North by Northwest.** In 1963, the Oscar for Best Special Effects went to **Cleopatra** for two or three vague superimpressions of Caesar's murder on Elizabeth Taylor's face — and that was the year of **The Birds**! One of the big American critics told me then: "You like **Rear Window** because you don't know Greenwich Vil-

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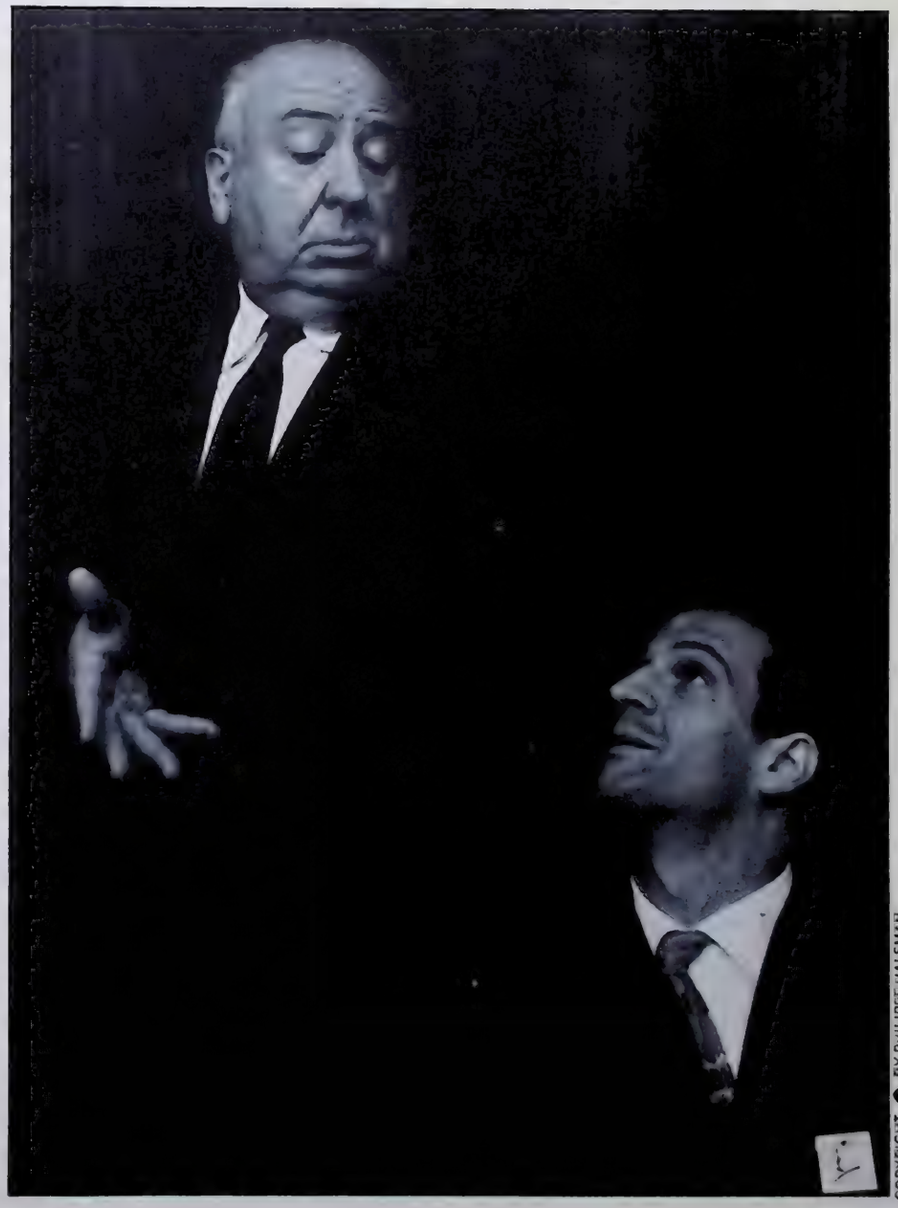

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is a kind of justice loose in the accidents of the world. There is more truth in the moments of silence and on the still faces of the god-heads in the British Museum, than in the speeches of the characters. There is more stability and insight in the eloquent silence of the painted jester than in any of the human images that move and speak. In this film, speech brings confusion and isolation rather than clarity and community. Little wonder that Hitchcock's appearance should be as a man trying quietly to read a book, but pestered by a noisy child!

Juno and the Paycock (1930)
Hitchcock often talks about having an orchestra on set for the scene around the phonograph. The scene is brilliant, the most concentrated expression of the main theme of the film: the concomitance of community and division, heartiness and loneliness, purity and guilt. Johnny's family gathers around the new phonograph (illusory emblem of their supposed wealth and hopeful future) as they sing "If You're Irish, Come into the Parlour". Up swells the sound of the funeral procession outside for the boy Johnny betrayed. The Parlour will soon be invaded by the Irish citizens out to avenge the lad. But for the moment the family is unaware of Johnny's guilt and torment, remotely sympathetic to the dead boy and his family, and struggling to maintain the buoyancy of their song. Where Hitchcock's technique is most striking, his meaning is most concentrated.

Rich and Strange

Murder (1930)
Here there is a similar scene, an orchestra in the bathroom while Sir John shaves. In the novel, Sir John's mirrors express his vanity and self-concern. But Hitchcock's hero uses art to serve life, the processes of drama to solve a murder. In the shaving scene the classical music he hears on the radio prompts him to reopen the investigation of the murder case. Art serves life and brings man out of his own egotism.

Rich and Strange (1932)
This conventional romantic comedy suddenly turns into one of Hitchcock's most mordant visions. Our heroes seem doomed to drown at the moment of their reunification. A cat is skinned and fed to the heroes. The company watches a man entangle himself on a rope and drop slowly to his death. Our heroes return to their marriage finally unimproved by their experiences, still petty, foolish, bickering, their relationship more fragile and themselves more arrogant than before.

Waltzes from Vienna (1933)
Hitchcock's only musical was greeted as an experimental advance at its first release, each character having his own motif, and the numbers advancing the plot and characterisation. Young Johann Strauss picks up the rhythm and the tempo for his Blue Danube waltz from the work-rhythms in the bakery, to which he must pseudo-Orphically descend to win his sweetheart. The firemen and cleaners work in unison. The world is alive with music, so the obligatory Hitchcock staircase sounds like a keyboard when a valet is rolled down. The senior Strauss is reconciled to his son's success (and by implication, his own eclipse) by an even younger girl, in a remarkably moving scene.

In all these early films it is clearly Hitchcock at work. We have the familiar legshots, and an extremely witty undressing scene in **The Pleasure Garden**, where the gals are on either side off-camera and we watch the chair collect the undies. Where we are accustomed to crisp heroics, Hitchcock gives us comic fights: **Champagne, No. 17, Waltzes from Vienna**, as on through **The Lady Vanishes** to

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lage very well." I replied: "**Rear Window** isn't a film about the Village but very simply a film about cinema and I know cinema." Then the thought came to me that Hitchcock, whose genius for publicity is rivaled only by Salvador Dali's, had been poorly served by the interviews he gave, which so often tended towards self-mockery. I told myself that if he would agree — for the first time in his life — to reply systematically to a thorough set of questions about his art and the way he worked, the book that would result could favorably modify his image among American intellectuals.

That's the whole story of the *Hitchcock-Truffaut* book.

Quickly translated by Helen Scott, my accomplice from the very beginning of this whole enterprise, our book has done quite well in the bookstores, having so far sold 40,000 copies in the paperback edition. Simon and Schuster, who reissue it each year, distribute quantities of it every semester among the colleges that teach cinema.

In the course of these last ten years, Hitchcock has finally received an Oscar, rewarding him for his entire oeuvre. Two years ago, the annual Gala of the Film Society of Lincoln Center was dedicated to him and we were able to review, in just one evening, more than one hundred extracts from his films, all of his "grandstand plays" grouped under different categories: "chase scenes, love scenes, murder scenes, suspense scenes, catastrophe scenes," etc. Each series of extracts was preceded by a little speech by the most beautiful Hitchcockian actresses: Grace Kelly, Joan Fontaine, Teresa Wright, Janet Leigh. What struck me that evening while reseeing all of these little bits of films I know by heart (isolated from their context and put together for a single evening) was the simultaneous sincerity and savagery of the Hitchcockian oeuvre. I realized that all the love scenes had been shot like murder scenes, and all the murder scenes like love scenes. I knew these films; I believed I knew them very well, and yet what I saw knocked me out. On the screen there were nothing but dazzling splashes, fireworks, ejaculations, sighs, death-rattles, cries, blood-loss, tears, twisted wrists; so it became clear to me that — in Hitchcock's cinema — to make love is nothing but to die.

Hitchcock's oeuvre will live longer than that of anyone else because each of the films that compose it was made with such art and such care that it's able to rival the most attractive new work in movie houses and on television sets today. Even those who don't consider themselves cinephiles especially know five or six Hitchcock films practically by heart from having seen them several times.

Hitchcock was never very concerned to know — still less to make known — exactly what his films say, but there is no other cineaste who knows as well as he how to describe the processes used to make understandable the machinery of the stories that he has chosen to tell himself at the same time as he is telling us.

At the time I planned this book — "the Hitchbook" — I was driven by a desire to convince. Today, I find myself in a different state of mind, even if I'm awaiting **Family Plot** with the same impatience as I did **Rear Window** twenty years ago. To tell the truth, there's no one left to convince about Hitchcock: like Bergman, like Bunuel, he has become an institution; critics who have dawdled have been left by the wayside; time has worked in his favor; in the long run, Hitchcock has won.

Number Seventeen

the death of poor Gromeck in **Torn Curtain**. Before Hitchcock has his term, "the Macguffin", the plot-spring turns out to be nothing, a message already known (**Downhill, Murder!**), a discovery unavoidable (**The Pleasure Garden, The Manxman, The Farmer's Wife, Waltzes from Vienna**), or the message redundant (**Easy Virtue, Champagne, The Lady Vanishes**). The interest of even these early films lies in the brilliant narrative devices, the emotional manipulation of the audience, and Hitchcock's vision of man living a precarious life, his every confidence bringing him closer to the real chaos underlying the social and the psychological orders.

Hitchcock's mastery of his medium is apparent from his first feature on. So is the personality of his cinema. What has gone unrecognized even in his later work is the intuitive import of his brilliant techniques. It is fashionable to dismiss Hitchcock as "merely" a craftsman. But his every extension of his technical resources is in service of the expression of his vision. Alfred Hitchcock rarely made a mistake. When we think he did, we must look again, for the mistake is more likely in our understanding than in his rhetoric. As early as **The Pleasure Garden** Hitchcock knew what he was doing.

The Manxman

Bookkeeping on an Analyst's Couch. A French Critic's Approach to Hitchcock

By David Bombyk

To some critics, Hitchcock means mystery, suspense, dazzling camerawork and montage. To Raymond Bellour, he means graphs, charts, and maps, which at first glance could make the reader think he had stumbled onto an auditor's account of Hitch's tax returns rather than an analysis of his work.

I am referring to a recent issue of the scholarly French periodical *Communications* (#23, "Psychoanalysis and Cinema") which includes Bellour's 115-page analysis of **North by Northwest**. This analysis includes approximately 300 numbered photographs of the film, 1 map, numerous schematic diagrams and 8 pages of structural charts.

Bellour is one of the young French critics currently approaching film through the filter of the latest French methodological and intellectual developments, now burgeoning in all areas of the arts and social sciences. Call it semiotics if you like, Bellour's work is broad in its sources, working from the theories and techniques of those current French intellectual superstars: Levi-Strauss, Lacan, Barthes, and Metz.

Among the basic premises presented in the introduction to this analysis is: "Oedipus as generator of the narrative form, which he opens and closes." This, along with other premises, is neither justified theoretically nor discussed at any length, but Bellour attempts to demonstrate this concept by exposing the Oedipal complex as the propelling and structuring force in Hitchcock's film.

The film is divided into three large movements according to the major Oedipal stages in the story. In the first movement, Cary Grant is trapped in an immature relationship with his mother. Then, although Grant does not really kill the man at the UN, this symbolic slaying of a symbolic father provides a preliminary patricide which permits Grant to escape from his castrating mother and begin the film's second movement by encountering "la femme castatrice," Eva Marie Saint, who sends Grant to his hair-raising dash around a cornfield.

In the third movement, Grant discovers that Saint is really on his side and he can finally substitute her as wife for the place previously held by his mother. First he must accept his castration (the fake shooting of him by Saint) and willingly accept the role of the father (who is now Leo G. Carroll, head of the CIA) by climbing down Mount Rushmore, symbol of country, history, and law, and therefore of "le père mort." Bellour magnificently extends his Oedipal structure to even the smallest character in the film, effortlessly producing idealized fathers, substitute fathers, patricides, filicides, etc.

Nor does he stop here, but proceeds to further draw and quarter the film by establishing 22 segments according to narrative action and setting. The segments are in turn divided into series (for example, segment 14 has 22 series), and then there are micro-series, not to mention systems and micro-systems.

A huge section of Bellour's article is an analysis (overwhelming in its meticulous presentation of minutiae) of the airplane chase sequence. The first and last frame of every shot in this segment is reproduced and numbered. A map (reproduced here) shows the geography and movement in the scene. Every field, corner, and road is given a letter-coded designation. Another diagram has number-coded arrows to represent every angle of Grant's point of view. Still other diagrams show the trajectories of the various vehicles in the segment. At this point the fun is over and the work begins, flipping from the photographs to the charts to the diagrams to follow Bellour's theorizing. But it all pays off when we reach the core of this giant: a paradigm of vehicles.

Bellour presents pages of graphs which divide the film into its various means of locomotion and masterfully reveal the film as, above all, a system of vehicles. The movie becomes a beautifully-choreographed pageant of airplanes, elevators, and trucks. The human body itself becomes a phallus for penetrating vehicles. The Oedipal chain is set into motion when Hitchcock attempts to board a bus in the beginning of the film and is prevented by the closing doors. This initial sexual failure by the auteur motivates the dream-fulfillment of Cary Grant thrusting himself successfully into so many cars and taxis.

Bellour acknowledges that this system in the film is only one in an infinity of systems, and although we are pleased by his respect for the inexhaustibility of the film, we shudder at the realization that this analysis could

continued on next page

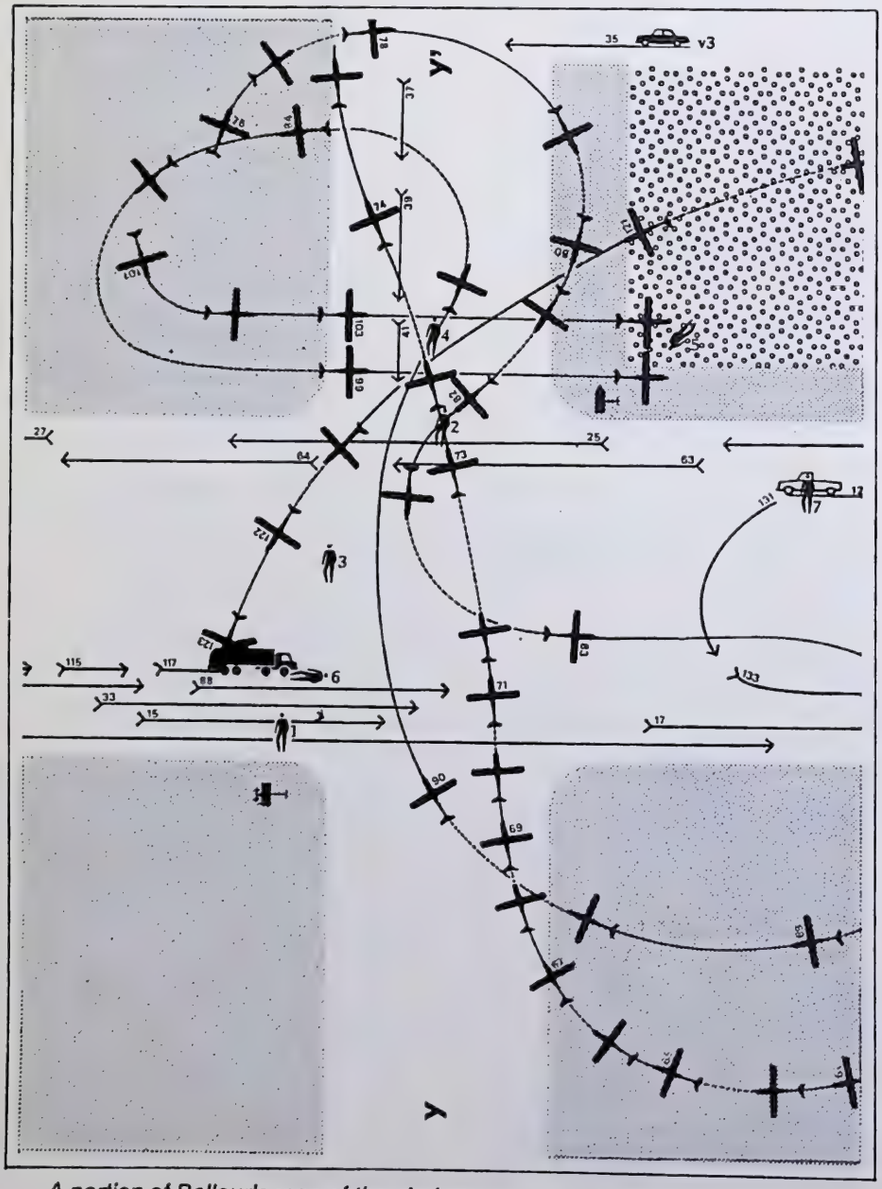
David Bombyk has just returned from studies in Paris with various French film critics, including Raymond Bellour. He will graduate from Brown University this spring.

The movie becomes a beautifully-choreographed pageant of airplanes, elevators and trucks, the human body itself a phallus for penetrating vehicles.

just as well have been 1,000 or 10,000 pages instead of its already-wearying 115.

A work of this kind was inevitable. The direction of French critical development indicated it was coming, and no doubt another work even more precise, detailed, schematic — and long — is on the horizon. We can be grateful that Bellour, in choosing to attack a film in this way, has done it brilliantly, giving solid support for each of his assertions through textual evidence. All of the statistics and data which he produces lead us toward tantalizing questions about how a film propels itself forward, how it creates its hypnotising, dreamlike effect, and how its principles of structure are ordered. Although we must respect the wisdom of Bellour in not carelessly tossing us easy answers, we would like to see, at least after wading through such extensive minutiae, some broader questions carefully examined. So often film semiotics is criticized for giving us raw theory with little or no practical criticism. Here we have practical criticism of astounding richness and scope which demands, instead, some exciting, broad, theoretical discussion.

Subscriptions to *Communications* are probably — among other things — a good investment: Single copies of #23 (in which Bellour's analysis ran) sell for as much as $17.50 on this side of the pond. For complete information, write c/o Éditions du Seuil, 7 rue Jacob, Paris 6.



A portion of Bellour's map of the airplane sequence in ***North by Northwest:*** *a frenzy of Freudian vehicles.*

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Plotting the Hitchcock Family

by Susan Schenker

Who says Alfred Hitchcock doesn't like actors? In 53 films, he has worked with a great many people — 225 primary crew members and 218 actors with major roles. Here's a guide to the Hitchcock family, in order of frequency.

CREWS

18 films
Alma Reville (adaptation/scenario).

12 films
Robert Burks (photographer).

11 films
Jack Cox (photographer, in England).

9 films
John Maxwell (producer, Eng).

8 films
Michael Balcon (producer, Eng), Charles Bennett (scenario, Eng), George Tomasini (editing), Bernard Herrmann (music).

7 films
Eliot Stannard (scenario, Eng), Ivor Montagu (producer, editing, Eng).

5 films
Bernard Knowles (photographer, Eng), Louis Levy (music, Eng), Joan Harrison (scenario), Edith Head (costumes), John Fulton (special effects), Hal Pereira (design), Herbert Coleman (assistant director).

4 films
Albert Jullion (design, Eng), Franz Waxman (music), Dmitri Tiomkin (music), G.J. Hopkins (design), John M. Hayes (scenario), Sam Comer (design), Henry Bumstead (design).

3 films
Baron Ventimiglia (photographer, Eng), Frank Mills (assistant director, Eng), René Harrison (editing, Eng), Alfred Junge (design, Eng), Ian Hay (dialogue, Eng), Otto Werndorff (design, Eng), J. Strassner (costumes, Eng), Charles Frend (editing, Eng), Harry Stradling (photographer), David O. Selznick (producer), Hal C. Kern (editing), Vernon Walker (special effects), Joseph Valentine (photographer), William Ziegler (editing), J.M. Johnson (design), Dan McCauley (assistant director), Saul Bass (titles), Robert Boyle (design), George Milo (design).

2 films
Claude McDonnell (photographer, Eng), Wilfred and Norman Arnold (design, Eng), Emile de Ruelle (editing, Eng), Charles Martin (photographer, Eng), Peter Proud (design, Eng), Edward Black (producer, Eng), Sidney Gilliat (scenario, Eng), George Barnes (photographer), Otto Lovering (editing), Van Nest Polglase (design), Roy Webb (music), William Hamilton (editing), Jack Skirball (producer), John Goodman (design), James Basevi (design), Ben Hecht (scenario), Thomas Morahan (design), Sidney Bernstein (producer), Hume Cronyn (adaptation), James Bridie (scenario), Wilkie Cooper (photographer), Rudi Fehr (editing), Arthur Krans (design), Angus McPhail (scenario), Frank McKelvey (design), James Brown (assistant director), Brian Moore (scenario), Ernest Lehman (scenario).

Some notable one-timers: Alfred Newman (music, **Mr. and Mrs. Smith**), Thornton Wilder (scenario, **Shadow of a Doubt**), Salvador Dali (dream sequence, **Spellbound**), May E. Romm (psychiatric consultant, **Spellbound**).

CAST

6 times
Leo G. Carroll (Hitchcock's favorite actor, besides Hitchcock).

4 times
John Longden (Eng), Cary Grant, James Stewart.

3 times
Malcolm Keen (Eng), Isabel Jeans (Eng), Violet Farebrother (Eng), Sara Allgood (Eng), Edmund Gwen (Eng), Percy Marmont (Eng), Ingrid Bergman (2 in a row), Grace Kelly (3 in a row: a record).

2 times (in England)
Miles Mander, John Stuart, Ivor Novello, Robin Irvine, Ian Hunter, Carl Brisson, Lillian Hall-Davies, Gordon Harker, Anny Ondra, Edward Chapman, Herbert Marshall, Phyllis Konstam, Frank Vosper, Leslie Banks, Peter Lorre, Nova Pilbeam, Madeline Carroll, Michael Redgrave, May Whitty, Charles Laughton.

2 times (in America)
Joan Fontaine, George Sanders (2 in a row), Nigel Bruce, Cedric Hardwicke, Robert Cummings, Joseph Cotten, Hume Cronyn (2 in a row), Farley Granger, Michael Wilding (2 in a row), Patricia Hitchcock, Jesse Royce Landis, John Forsythe, Vera Miles, Tippi Hedren (2 in a row), Rod Taylor, Bruce Dern.

Unforgettable singles: Robert Donat, John Gielgud, Sylvia Sidney, Oscar Homolka, Margaret Lockwood, Laurence Olivier, Judith Anderson, Joel McCrea, Laraine Day, Carole Lombard, Robert Montgomery, Priscilla Lane, Otto Kruger, Teresa Wright, MacDonald Carey, Tallulah Bankhead, William Bendix, Walter Slezak, Claude Rains, Ann Todd, Marlene Dietrich, Jane Wyman, Ruth Roman, Marion Lorne, Anne Baxter, Ray Milland, Wendell Corey, Brigitte Auber, Shirley MacLaine, Doris Day, Henry Fonda, Kim Novak, Eva Marie Saint, Anthony Perkins, Martin Balsam, Janet Leigh, Suzanne Pleshette, Sean Connery, Diane Baker, Paul Newman, Julie Andrews, Barry Finch, Anna Massey.

Unforgettable single Paul Newman

Susan Schenker is a freelance story analyst for major motion picture companies and has recently completed Books About Film: A Bibliographical Checklist.

An Alfred Hitchcock Bibliography

by Sreekumar Menon

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continued on page 39

Sreekumar Menon has written for The Village Voice *and* Take One *and is presently editing an anthology of essays on film Semiotics.*

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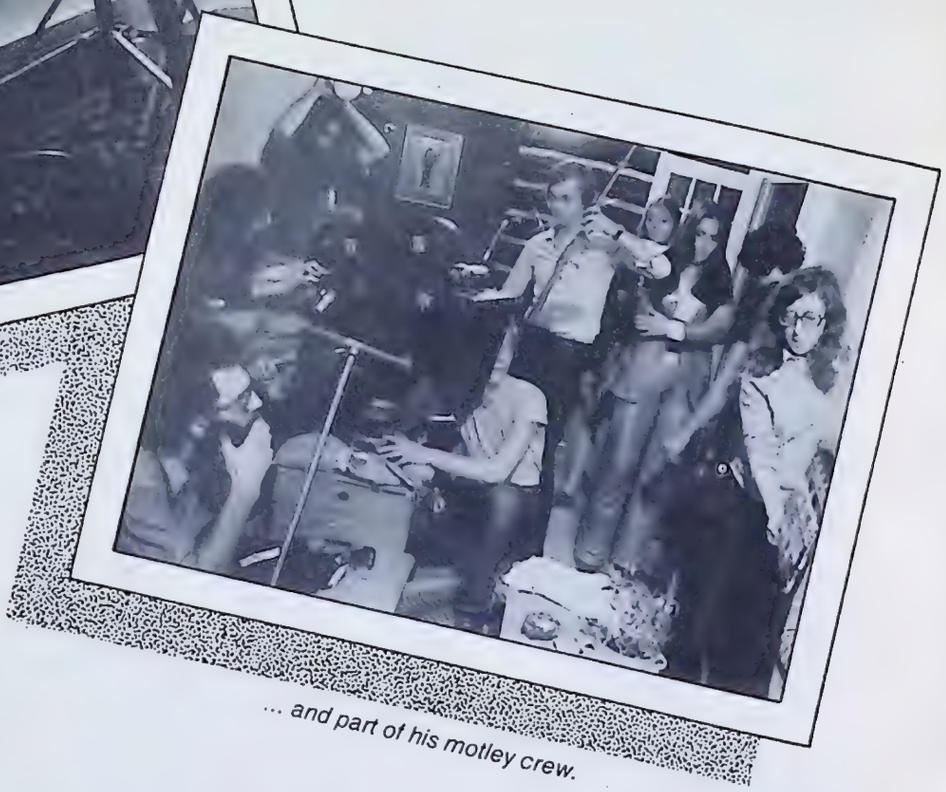


... and part of his motley crew.

Making Cindy

Far away from The Main, holed up in the kitchen of a luxury apartment penthouse on the set of **Cindy**, Frank Vitale's first dramatic 35mm feature about "high-class hookers 'n' hoods," a half-dozen local actresses are squeezed around the makeup-strewn table. Andrée Pelletier who plays Cindy, our heroine ex-hooker with the heart of gold, is brushing back the bloom into Christine Shoemaker's cheeks, reviving her from a dead junkie to a sick junkie. (That upstart pimp Dan is turning mean, forcing girls into prostitution and ODing them, which is why Cindy decides to embark on a rescue mission and starts picking up her stablemates on the streetcorners of downtown Montreal...)

Erla the Art Director is pouring sugar into a plastic baggie. "Is this what heroin looks like?" From behind the kitchen door, where it's Hollywood, Frank and his motley crew — three ass't cameramen, three ass't directors, grips, gaffers, all amateurs, friends, film school graduates shuffling functions, and a Director of Photography who will not allow either a nonprofessional crew or other such considerations as time, schedules, exposure, exhaustion to compromise his quest for the perfect lighting setup.

The blimped camera is poised over the leopardskin rug.

"Is she undead yet?"

Yes, but now she looks too healthy.

"Quiet for a take." Everybody freezes except Chris the grip or "schlepper" who keeps muttering, "This movie has no theme. You gotta have a theme. *Hamlet* had a theme..."

Hours later the "hoods" (a used-car salesman, a bouncer from the Café Lodeo) are discussing strongarm tactics. "I wanted to bust Frank in the mouth, then he asks me to be in the movie." Alan 'Bozo' Moyle, the manic production manager-actor who plays Cindy's boyfriend (changing out of his own unironed clothes into his carefully wrinkled "costume"), and today's ass't director, is on the phone with the apartment-owner who wants to come home (we've overstayed our welcome, as we will in every alleyway, poolhall, suburban home through 18-hour all-night and into the following day shoots, with the maid fixing breakfast for the kids, the customers pouring in with the sunshine, the tired actress in tears, the owner threatening to sue, and we're still not finished, up goes the day-for-night tarpaper...).

His golden voice getting softer the louder the surrounding ruckus, Frank Vitale, the still center of the storm, is padding around the opulent living room set in one brown sock and one blue sock.

Last summer a poster appeared around Montreal: "Maker of **Montreal Main** needs Actors and Nonactors. No Experience Necessary." Frank Vitale, the independent

By Elizabeth Wajnberg

*Elizabeth Wajnberg is the "accident-prone P.A." She notifies us that, at last report, Cinepix has decided to re-name the film **East End Hustle** — despite the fact that its action takes place almost exclusively in Montreal's "West End".*

Canadians have never heard of anything so frivolous as art for art's sake. Our art is documentary (nothing unreal can happen here).

filmmaker who actually made Montreal look funky, not 40 years ago but right now (Drapeau's travelogue city seen for once not embalmed through a tourist lens but alive in a 16mm rough diamond), is screening the whole city! He made a street movie, and now he's streetcasting.

"My grant from the Film Development Corporation didn't come through. I'm going ahead anyway. Uh, can you work for free?"

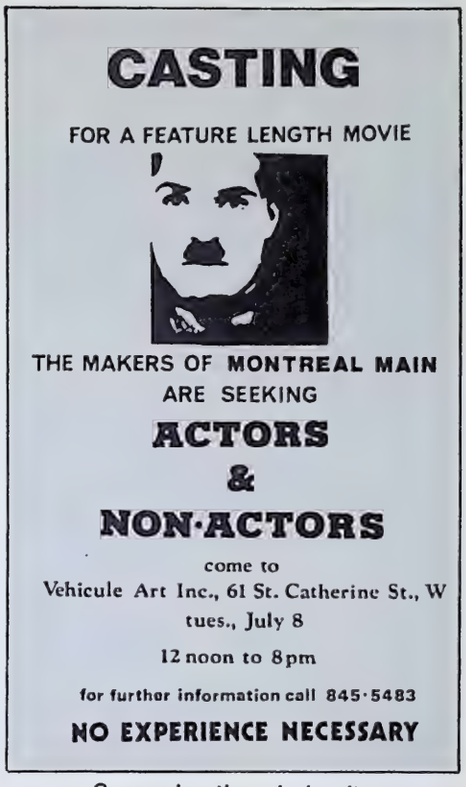
Sure, they'll work for free. In a country the size of Canada that turns out ten films a year, where will the yearly crop of film school graduates and local actors hungry for experience work for anything else? Stuart, a graduate of Loyola film school who became the second ass't director, sums up the Canadian film industry: "There is no industry." Larry Kent, the first Canadian independent filmmaker (**High**), says, "We're still at the beginning," claiming that the government prefers to back an untried director's first film rather than second or third efforts (plant a few seeds but don't water the ground). Visiting Vitale, the latest Canadian independent filmmaker, Kent asks to borrow the casting files...

Frank Vitale came to McGill University from Jacksonville, Florida in 1963, spent three years in New York working freelance on films, then returned to Montreal "because my friends are here," and made **Country Music Montreal, Montreal Main** and several documentaries.

Phil McPhedran, the professional ass't director who worked with Frank on a CBC documentary, comes from Toronto and drives himself hoarse in a gallant effort to keep on schedule, exhorting the crew; "Guys, I don't wanna make the Guinness Book of Records," conning the cameraman; "C'mon, we have two freezing bums out here," filling our production reports between setups at 3 a.m., and counting up the average 15 hours in disbelief, till he gets sick and has to leave. He gave up a $3,000 job for this. Why? "Because I like Frank."

Does Cindy think she can get away with kidnapping the girls? From the original script: "Lots of people love Cindy and are willing to help her."

What does Frank think he's doing? No money (two loans of $10,000 worth of services from Cinepix and Quebec Film Labs), no industry, not paying anybody, shooting in expensive cumbersome 35mm with a big amateur crew ("It was scary, we were a big machine running on little gas.") from a Kiss Kiss Bang Bang script, with a cast of thousands, the whole mimetic schmear as if he were Ross Hunter, as if he'd never made **Montreal Main**, the Quintessential Home Movie that looked as if it had been made on not much more than home movie resources. What's he doing with all this acting when **Montreal Main** was about "real" people, him and his friends?



Screening the whole city.

What made **Montreal Main** so shimmeringly "real" was the admission of that very impulse to turn the cameras around on your friends, to capture their transient best takes; so transparent in its self-awareness that it hovered on the brink of a new intimacy with the audience. It included the source of their improvising energy — that youthful euphoric self-experimentation just a minute before you and your friends are famous, *les enfants terribles* holding up the mirror to each other's images and surroundings. Revealing selfconsciousness made even a degenerate pose look innocent, wholesome. A William Burroughs conceit. They were all the more disarming for not pretending to be genuine, which perhaps takes a greater degree of detachment than Cassavetes' friends pretending to be Husbands or Mailer's friends pretending to be hoods.

But Frank's already made **Montreal Main**, so why should he do it again? Like his crew Frank is hungry for experience. **Cindy** is an opposite experience. Shooting in bulky 35mm itself implies a mass audience, magnifying, slowing down the light impressionistic "underground" style. It's the difference between "real" people, nonactors who playact all the time, and the traditional mode of actors who must pretend they're not acting.

When Dan the pimp (the Brandoesque Miguel Fernandez) confronts Cindy's new hip boyfriend, "Money is what I'm all about," the world of **Cindy** clashes with the world of **Montreal Main**. Bozo taunts him, "Why don't you beat me up?" Dan shakes his head, "I might have you *killed*." Crunch. This is a movie in which you can get killed for being an underground smart alec.

Driving home after shooting the pimp's party scenes (2 strip acts, 1 rape, etc.), a film student helping for the day says "Sounds like a dirty movie. Is **Cindy** going to play in the Cinema V or the Pussycat?" (Is it Art or is it Porn?) Actress Pegi Baits replies "Did you see **Montreal Main**? It played at the Elysée. I think it's the most sensitive movie I've ever seen. It's about the relationship between Frank and a 12-year-old boy. I guess **Cindy** is more...commercial."

"I wish it *were* porn," says Bozo. "Then we'd have a handle."

What attracts people to Frank, what baffles them, what makes him original as a filmmaker is that absence of conceptual exploitation which makes a part stand for the whole, a "handle" for a movie, a stereotype for a person, a cliché for an experience. **Montreal Main** sounds like a dirty movie too ("The relationship between Frank and a 12-year-old boy.") Like Frank's friends in the movie, who can't understand that he is going too far without any intention of being far out.

In **Cindy**, with a topic that reeks of exploitative possibilities, Frank's shooting against the grain: The hookers don't look like hookers. Andrée Pelletier says how surprised she was to get the part of a whore: "I'm usually cast as a *jeune Québécoise*, with all the hair." She's not the only one who's surprised. In a business that is by definition image-making, Frank doesn't typecast, doesn't fulfill the preconception of what a whore looks like (which is itself derived from other movies). And isn't that also half the women's battle — to stop abstracting the "woman" image from the whole person?

But if Andrée doesn't fit the "whore" fantasy, she fits the script: Cindy is "a natural manly woman with an open face." There has never been anyone else like Cindy. We've had heroines in the sense of main character but rarely in the sense of heroic, like her male counterpart in an action movie. Even Jane Fonda had to be saved by Klute. Cindy not only rescues her boyfriend, she even magnanimously offers to share him with her love-starved friend Marianne (Anne-Marie Provencher); "He ain't padlocked." Best of all she's not even neurotic about being a whore.

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scenes are scenes of sweet female camaraderie and triumph, Cindy and Marianne driving around like Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid. A movie that shows "businessmen" sweating to lift a girl's skirt also shows the girls idyllically swimming nude with the comment, "Aren't they beautiful?"

As with the cast, the locations are chosen objectively to fit the script, not vice versa. No taking the long route through scenic Chinatown to get to the mountain, as in **The Pyx**. Frank Vitale lives in Montreal and has gotten over it. He's seeing it from the inside. Why be a tourist in your own town? By casting Montreal unselfconsciously as any city you get a richer sociological mix than by forever pointing at Place Ville Marie. Was **Breathless** about Paris?

Not only does **Cindy** take for granted Montreal, prostitution, women's lib, it also takes for granted a *(quel horreur!)* mixed English and French cast, all talking together as if it were the most natural thing in the world.

Drawing electricity and water to "rain" down on actresses in an alley three floors below a loft belonging to friends of the production. "Did Frank ever tell you the heartbreak, the despair of trying to finance **Montreal Main**, even after he'd made the video pre-shoot?"

Perhaps the reason Frank Vitale can't get money from a government clamouring for "Canadian Content" is not that his content is too exploitative but that it's not exploitative enough in terms of the 19th century English - Canadian sensibility that requires a moral or social message, a bureaucratic handle. Canadians have never heard of anything so frivolous as art for art's sake. Our art is documentary (nothing unreal can happen here), part of the John Grierson-National Film Board legacy which stifles everything else with that Godlike third-eye point of view: "You're in good hands with us, we've figured out all the moral angles, here's the theme." (*Does* Hamlet have a theme?)

"I'm sick and tired of being an immigrant." The third eye can afford to be so safe because it always comes too late for the immigrant, the Eskimo, the Indian, after the suffering has been codified in sociology textbooks and it's even difficult to find someone "authentic" enough. *That's* exploitation. Porn and horror films come closest to breaking the stranglehold, to letting us play.

Even the real pimp we meet while shooting **Cindy** can't accept that this isn't a documentary. **Cindy** holds more titillating promise as a voyeuristic exposé of low-life, but in sticking to his own vision of crime's banal middle-class underbelly, Frank outdoes real life. Three months after the film is shot, his fiction could be a blueprint for the Quebec Crime Commission's exposé of the Dubois brothers.

However, "It's just a film," says Frank of **Cindy** and this gratuitousness, which should be exhilarating, makes us nervous. "We're still at the beginning," and the first thing beginners notoriously want to do is tackle a pretentious subject (actually, the second, the first is to make **Jaws**), either copy "life" or copy a slick US movie, but not a B-movie plot — we don't have the *character*. What underlies this nervousness is the Canadian inferiority complex, the fear that without a cover we will be shown up for what we are — unhip, unprofessional, *drab*. But Frank Vitale made urban poetry of our naiveté in **Montreal Main**, and **Cindy** will reveal us all the more for sparing us overt "Canadian Content". If **Montreal Main** at times looked like Warhol, it never felt like Warhol because Frank's suspension of judgment leads to, instead of a deadbeat blowout, fresh possibilities. As cynics we would look most foolish. Frank's openness is ideal in expressing a country that has not yet defined itself.

At the end of **Cindy**, Dan calls in some underworld help from New York who are going "to show you hicks how things are done in the Big Apple." They're so professional that although furious at Cindy for gumming up the works, they don't kill her because they won't get *paid* for it. And theirs is the last line of the film: "Crazy fuckin' Canadians!" There's your Canadian content. Nobody ever called us *crazy* before...

All night the camera angles have been multiplying in Andrée/Cindy's apartment. Finally, towards the end of the midnight-to-noon shoot, with the stunned production ass'ts schlaffed out on the furniture in hallways, the call for the last take: Bozo's entrance with a breakfast tray, saying "Wakey, wakey!" The mike is tucked between Andrée's crossed legs, the accident-prone female P.A. is ready, after much coaching, to do the slate, when suddenly Julian the soundman hears a noise — it's Chris the schlepper asleep in another room, snoring. Wakey, wakey!

Making this film is a quixotic venture, like Cindy saving the girls. Does Cindy think she can buck the mob? Does Frank think he can buck the variables? Will he run out of time, money, film, will the lighting setup be in time for the actress's emotional climax, will Chris shut up for the next take, will the camera topple off the appleboxes? The original title was "Will Cindy?" *Will Frank*?

The last week. You can tell things are loosening up when the fastidious scriptgirl, Catherine, nurtured on Chabrol's epicurean sets, desperately grabs, at 4 a.m., a Johnny Canuck cookie, "Lemme eat this crummy cake!" and genially starts calling people "shitface." Bozo's demanding to know who's scored.

Through it all, the amazing grace of Frank Vitale...

Maybe it is possible for an independent filmmaker to make films in Canada. Maybe Cindy can save the girls.

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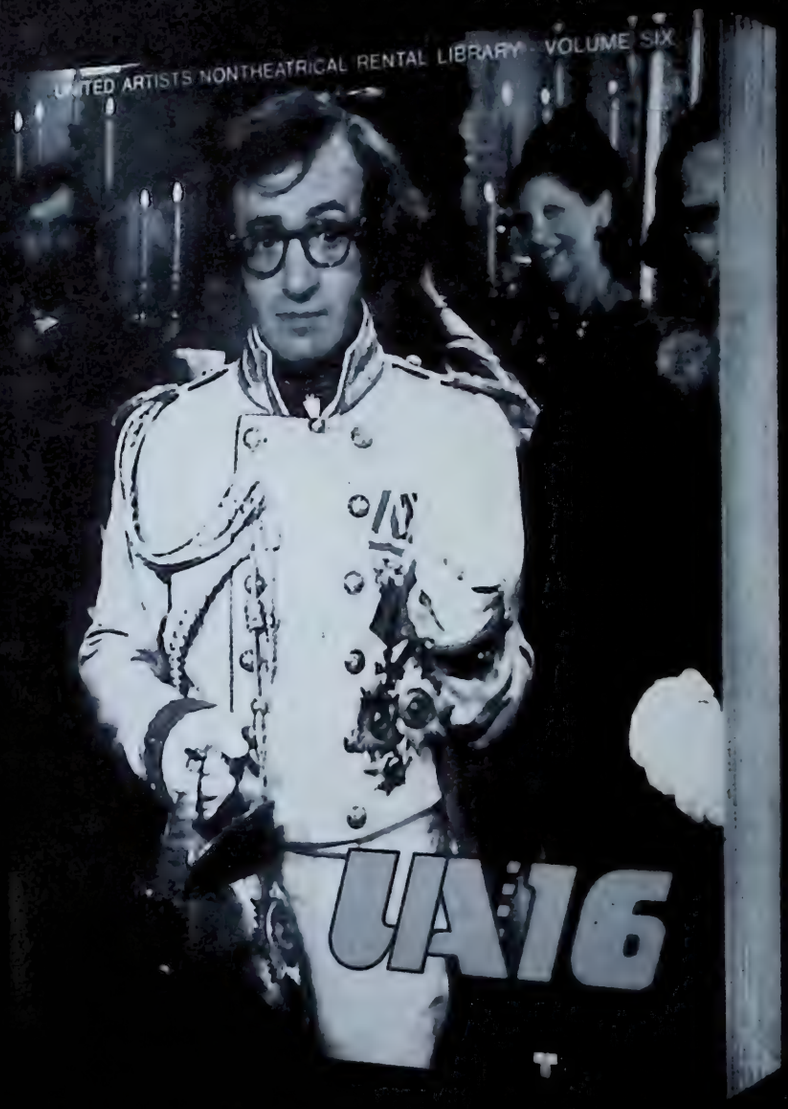

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COLUMNS

Confessions of a Cel-Washer

Our hero makes good

In which our new columnist, Chuck Jones, tells us a little about himself.

Chuck Jones was born in Spokane, Washington, U.S.A. and emigrated to Southern California at the age of six months. He was accompanied on this journey by two (2) parents, two (2) sisters and a brother, Richard Kent Jones, now an audiovisual education authority with UNESCO in Mexico City. Richard Kent Jones corraled a substantial and unfair portion of the cerebral matter available in the Jones family.

Mr. Jones (Chuck) received a sketchy but catholic education in California and attended Chouinard Art Institute, now California Institute of the Arts, graduating without distinction or the ability to draw. After nearly ten years of night school with Donald Graham, Mr. Jones still could not draw but he now could fake it well.

While this was going on Mr. Jones found that bad drawing was no particular advantage in the field of commercial art but that it was ideal for cel(uloid) washing. As a cel-washer Mr. Jones was discovered by Ubbe Iwerks, who had just started his own studio after leaving Walt Disney. Mr. Jones washed **Flip the Frogs** with distinction and alacrity and began his long climb to mediocrity by becoming successively a painter, an inker and eventually an inbetweener, from which lofty post he was immediately fired, Mr. Iwerks recognizing the Peter Principle even then: that a good cel-washer could become a singularly incapable inbetweener.

After brief sorties with Charles Mintz and Walt Lantz, neither of whom wanted cel-washers inbetweening, Mr. Jones returned to the Iwerks studio where he was unrecognized, but his work unfortunately was, and he was fired again, this time by Dorothy Webster, a sociologist from Portland, Oregon who later became his wife, probably with the wan supposition that a good cel-washer might be also a good dish-washer.

Mr. Jones, carrying his credentials under his arm, shipped out before the mast for Central America on a large schooner which promptly caught fire and burned to the water's edge leaving Mr. Jones with a suit of long red underwear and one tennis shoe to face the world.

Feeling rightly that this haberdashery fitted him for the life of a bohemian (hippy) he moved onto the artist's section of Olvera Street, working as a maladroit puppeteer and sketch artist ($1.00 a throw — a grotesque overcharge).

After a year of this and having had to refund ten cents on the dollar on 85% of his portraits, Mr. Jones felt the need for greater security and married Dorothy Webster who was still working steadily and had saved up $3.00 for the marriage license. Miss Webster, now Mrs. Jones, proved herself perfidious by obtaining a job for Mr. Jones with Leon Schlesinger, who had just split off from Harman/Ising to form his own studio.

Since Leon Schlesinger did not draw he didn't know the difference between a cel-washer and an inbetweener and Mr. Jones, knowing a good thing when he saw it, remained in those cloistered halls most of his adult life. By the time Mr. Edward Selzer took over command when Leon Schlesinger sold out to Warner Bros., Mr. Jones was directing, the first time a cel-washer had accomplished this without detection. Mr. Selzer, who did not know a director from a hole-in-the-ground, supposed Mr. Jones to be a hole and treated him accordingly.

As an animator Mr. Jones worked (if the term can be used this loosely) for directors Jack King, Earl Herd and Friz Freleng, and as inbetweener to Ham Hamilton, who then forced him into animation to get him off inbetweening. This was on the Buddy series and fortunately nothing in the way of bad animation could make Buddy worse than he was anyway.

Messrs. King, Herd and Freleng put up no resistance whatsoever when Mr. Jones and Bob Clampett were assigned to the newly formed Tex Avery unit, known accurately if not affectionately as "Termite Terrace." The prime product of Termite Terrace, beside termites, was Porky Pig and the beginnings of the wildly insane version of Daffy Duck.

Poor Ubbe Iwerks! Mr. Schlesinger came to his financial aid about then but as a penalty sent Mr. Jones and Mr. Clampett to Ubbe's studio to act as co-directors on a series called Gabby Goat. By some peculiar alchemy not yet understood by Mr. Jones the co-directorship disappeared and Mr. Jones found himself animating for Bob Clampett.

Henry Binder, business manager for Leon Schlesinger, a man who could not bear to see dumb animals suffer, rescued Mr. Jones and put him in as director of the Frank Tashlin unit, Mr. Tashlin having lost interest in animation (he was to

go on and become a very successful live-action writer, director, producer).

Mr. Jones' first directorial achievement was **The Nightwatchman** in 1938, followed by some films about dogs, mice, bats and some of the first and worst Bugs Bunnies. In 1940 Mr. Jones won the *Newsreel Theatre*'s Award for the best animated cartoon of the year, a patriotic cartoon called **Old Glory**. This award was unique in that it was never given before or since and in that it was the first such award to be won by a cel-washer.

During the war years Mr. Jones collaborated (there must be a better word) with Theodore Geisel (Dr. Seuss) on a goof-up soldier named Private Snafu. Almost twenty-five years later this writer director team would produce **How the Grinch Stole Christmas** and **Horton Hears a Who**, which won the Peabody Award for television programming excellence in 1971, an award that *has* been given before and since.

In 1941 Mr. Jones directed **The Dover Boys**, considered by many animators, including John Hubley, to help set the method and timing for much of the stylized animation to follow. Along with John McGrew, Bernyce Polifka and Eugene Fleury he was also experimenting with stylized and formalized background in such films as **Fox Pop, Bugs Bunny and the Three Bears** and **The Aristo-cat**. That's right, **The Aristo-cat**, in 1943; this is what is known as retroactive plagiarism.

In 1944, working nights, Mr. Jones directed **Hell Bent for Election**, the first full-length UPA short.

Films directed by Mr. Jones won two Academy Awards in 1950: **For Scentimental Reasons**, with Pepe Le Pew and the documentary award for **So Much for So Little** (written with Friz Freleng), the first and only time an animated short has won in this category.

In 1962 Mr. Jones with his wife, Dorothy, wrote an original story and screenplay for UPA, **Gay Purr-ee**, with the voices of Judy Garland, Robert Goulet, Hermione Gingold and Red Buttons, and directed by Abe Levitow. A couple of years later Disney brought forth a feature on the same subject, cats in Paris, and called it — guess what? — **The Aristocats**! The addition of the S was a stroke of genius.

MGM at this time wanted some more Tom 'n Jerrys and couldn't afford Hanna and Barbera, who had originated the series. So Mr. Jones rallied his old crew around him and made some Tom 'n Jerrys, and also Frank Tashlin's **The Bear that Wasn't**, and **The Dot and the Line**, which won an Academy Award in 1962.

During this time at MGM Mr. Jones also produced, co-directed, and co-authored the screenplay for **The Phantom Tollbooth**, a full-length feature. A critical success, a box-office question mark.

For a year Mr. Jones was a vice-president of the American Broadcasting Company, hopefully to help in the cause of children's television programming. With the help of the National Film Board of Canada, the Zagreb Studios, and many talented cartoonists such as Johnny Hart, Don Arioli, and Hank Ketcham, **Curiosity Shop** was produced: a seventeen unit one-hour program for Saturday morning. This program can be described in a kindly way as high ordinary, but it did establish in Mr. Jones' porous but not always selective mind that short subjects and television specials were better arenas for talented cel-washers.

Subsequently, Mr. Jones established his own independent production company, Chuck Jones Enterprises. During the past three years he has produced and directed six half-hour television primetime specials. They are: **The Cricket in Times Square; A Very Merry Cricket**; and **Yankee Doodle Cricket** (for ABC) and three stories from Rudyard Kipling's *The Jungle Book* — **Rikki-Tikki-Tavi; The White Seal**; and **Mowgli's Brothers** (for CBS).

Also during this time Mr. Jones served as executive producer for Charles Dickens' **A Christmas Carol**, done in toto by the incredibly talented Richard Williams in London. Jones' creative contribution was to find a sponsor and a network. Hopefully Mr. Williams and Mr. Jones will continue this relationship on future productions, Jones wisely responding to the ancient edict: "The best substitute for talent is to surround yourself with talent."

The teaching situation in the United States is best exemplified by reporting that Mr. Jones has lectured and conducted workshops at Stanford University, the University of Kansas, University of Iowa, San Francisco State College and many others. The University of California at Santa Cruz conducted an accredited course on his films under the direction of Tim Hunter, and two books on him are to be published this year by Joe Adamson and Greg Ford. You wouldn't think there would be that much to say about cel-washing. A recent United States Information Agency magazine, printed in Russian for distribution in the USSR, features an article on Jones' work. For the record, the name "Chuck" in Russian comes out "Yak."

Charles Martin Jones

Notes from the New Cinema

Dreamlike and mysterious

If paintings were movies, Barry Gerson's new films are how they would appear. **Inversion, Translucent Appearances** and **Celluloid Illuminations** relate more to the aesthetics and concepts of painting (by way of Hans Hoffman) than they do to those of cinema. In spite of their self-imposed limitations, these three films are fascinating in their exploration of spatially ambiguous interrelationships. Most films of this sort, when they are good, seldom rise above the level of impersonal experiments. In Gerson's films one is constantly made aware of the filmmaker's probing, touching and cautious searching to discover some aspects of secure truth. The factual truth never reveals itself, it remains unresolved and ever changing. Somewhere inside the ambiguities of form and space a real personality emerges. There is also a sense of claustrophobic fear in the pursuit of these images. Nearly all the images have vertical, horizontal or angular barriers cutting the screen shape into sections and framing the illustrative space beyond. Even these areas (sky, sea, etc.) are not necessarily what they appear to be. The three dimensionality of the scene is completely flattened out. As in abstract painting, space depth is created more by color than by any relationship to physical perspective. The accumulation of mood is apprehensive, as if every small change in the secure balance of form within the fixed screen shape could be a possible threat to the totality. One gets the impression that Gerson needs to contain his life experience by reducing events and images to states of near fixation in order to keep himself from flying apart in chaos. His protective order is not permanent, it threatens to destruct at any moment.

Inversion, 1973 (12 minutes). The image consists of a house and its mirror image. The mirror image slowly moves, and in so doing alters the spatial relationship between itself and the 'real' house. The weight shifts from one side to the other. The mirror image at first seems to be a real house until it actually begins to move. A mirror image of a clothesline then slowly moves up the glass until it unites in a straight line with the 'real' image of a clothesline. At one point the reflected image reveals a tree not seen in the 'real' image at all. Gerson transforms illustrative images into basic forms fluctuating on a two dimensional plane, a counterpoint of vertical and horizontal movements in a given rectangular space. The only foreign elements that disturb the consistency of the experience are several annoyingly abrupt jump cuts between scenes.

A left hand reflected closeup of the roof of a house shifts back and forth in space, seemingly of its own volition without reference to its being a reflection. The edge of the reflecting window glass is revealed, breaking the space. Squeezed on the right is the fixed image of another real roof with a tree above it. The reflected image wavers towards the vertical edge of the out-of-focus window frame. Blurred images are caused by a warp in the reflecting glass. The total image then shifts to a long shot where the 'real' house takes up most of the right hand side, and the reflected image is relegated to a small vertical portion on the left. The dullness of the subject matter is transformed into

something dreamlike and mysterious as a kind of tug-of-war takes place between reality and illusion.

Translucent Appearances, 1975 (22 minutes), consists of moving water and waterfall imagery intersected by three horizontal bars. When the horizontal masking across the waterfall image attains a pure blackness in tone, it becomes too much out of touch with the mid range tonality of the watery background and looks like a piece of tape. When the masking becomes lighter, it relates directly to the image behind it and integrates completely. It no longer appears so much as a mask, as it does an extension of the waterfall itself. The resulting masked images are very formal and beautiful. Portions of the water are then masked and unmasked. The masks appear white, grey and black. The next image is of rolling waves. The combination of flowing water movement and rigid masking sucks you into the framed area almost hypnotically. The masking bars also create pictorial illusions; the bars seem to be sky forms in the distance. At other times they appear to be but a few inches distant from your eyes depending on the thrust of the water movement. The slow zoom used on the rolling water causes the masking bars to rise and fall in regular breathing patterns. They appear by turns translucent and opaque, and seem to stretch to infinity. When the film does not become merely mechanical, there is a constant sense of surprise and discovery. Near the end the entire image of the waterfall is blocked off by a large translucent grey area with the exception of a small strip at the top.

Celluloid Illuminations, 1975 (32 minutes), is a study of constantly changing tonal values that slowly erodes the fixed look of an image which consists of a vertical rectangle of sky and water. On the left a post or a portion of a wall has light values in a state of constant change. A bird flies by and describes an arc within the rectangle. Further changes of light values in the sky and water commence. There is a continuing uncompromising attack on three dimensional space, forcing it to conform to the flat surface of the projected screen plane.

Gerson differs from the minimalists who seem to thrive on impersonality, in effect to hide themselves behind their work by doing films on the level of academic intellectual doodles. Gerson's films are not so formal that they kill off the vulnerability of the artist behind their creation, and for me this is their strength. Without the sense of discovery and searching that they present, they would never rise above the level of excercises. His films contain a romantic and subjective outlook which combines the painter's sensibilities with that of a filmmaker. Bars, lines, masks and shadows serve to accent the fluid living spaces beyond, but we never break through to a three dimensional reality, we are faced with the fact that it is a flat screen of moving shadows and there we must remain. Somewhere in these shifts of tone and changes of color lies our real experience of these films.

I had mentioned in my previous column that I was going to review several new short films by various artists this time around, but I have decided to wait until the next issue.

Bob Cowan

Film as Business

The Distribution Contract Part 2

In Part 1 of this discussion (Volume 4, No. 12), I came to grips with some of the contractual terms a film producer or owner must negotiate with his favorite distributor. These included the duration and extent of the license, the territories involved, the media covered and your warranties as to the title in the picture. There are, however, other vitally important provisions that you or your counsel must keep in mind.

To state the obvious, a subject of prime concern is always — money. Depending on your bargaining position, there may be money "up front" as a guarantee against your "producer's share" of revenues to be earned. Or there may be a simple "ad-

Bob Cowan is a Canadian filmmaker living, working, and winning prizes in the U.S.

Dish Night

TOAST-A OF THE TOWN: Fast-fame director Lina Wertmuller won the hard hearts of New York when she appeared on stage at a Film Society of Lincoln Center screening of **Seven Beauties** and asked the assembled fashion plates "You like-a my belt?" Two nights later, she and her star Giancarlo Gianinni were feted at the Italian Embassy, and Lina Week finished off with a bang at Gil Shiva's digs, where Coppola put in an appearance, as well as Marisa Berenson, who had scarcely dropped Rick von Opel when she and Giancarlo were hitting all of the latest Hustle palaces, especially Infinity. Lina came away from all of this adoration with a four-picture deal with Warner Brothers, with Shiva as producer. She'd like her first project to be **Caligula** with Brando as the Emperor and Gianinni in his favorite Everyman role. The late Emperor may be this year's Harlow: Bob (*Penthouse*) Guccione will also roll a version of the madman's life, with Franco Rosselini directing from a Gore Vidal script.

WHO'S SWIFTY LAZAR?: The scam from D.C. is that one of many reasons *The Final Days* is not Henry Kissinger's favorite bedside reading is that the latest Woodstein tome covers much of the same material The K was planning to use in his own memoirs. Meanwhile, the year's hottest date never got off the ground, much to the dismay of the Capital City's papparazzi, because Henry stood up Liz Taylor for the opening of the American Ballet Theatre at the Kennedy Center. Liz was left in the embarrassing position of acting as beard for Liza Minnelli and Halston.

HEART OF GOLD: Shirley MacLaine has replaced Marion Javits as the Most Hated Woman in Manhattan. At the opening of her revue at the Palace, the ex-gamine referred to New York as "the Karen Anne Quinlan of American cities." She made a public apology the next day, but the reviews had already come out.

SWINGTIME: The reason Ginger Rogers was so snippy to *Village Voice* writer Jane Goldberg, who interviewed the aging goddess while she was in New York for a cabaret stopover, might have had something to do with Ginger's request to be interviewed by her most articulate fan, Arlene Croce (who did *The Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers Book*). Her most articulate fan's response: No.

WELL, GARBO WAS SWEDISH WASN'T SHE?: On her way through town to promote **Face to Face** Liv Ullmann paused between talk shows long enough to sign with Joe Papp to appear onstage next season in a revival of O'Neill's *Anna Christie*. The man who shattered a million dreams of stardom when he put all of us on the chorus line has also threatened to produce *Hamlet* with Glenda Jackson. *As* Hamlet.

GOTCHA: The day after the New York opening of **All the President's Men** (which was attended by every Redford groupie in the five boroughs), the *Daily News* ran a series of photographs in its centerfold showing Anne (Mrs. Dustin) Hoffman at the post-premiere party, stowing a bottle of wine beneath her skirt and making off with it.

TWOSOMES: Still going strong — Paramount prexy Barry Diller and former princess and *Newsweek* cover girl Diane von Furstenberg. Too early to tell — Director Nic Roeg and Candy Clark, who stars with David Bowie in Roeg's **The Man Who Fell to Earth**. You all remember Candy as the platinum blonde number in **American Graffiti**.

Waldo Lydecker

vance" against such revenues. The difference is significant. A guarantee belongs to you no matter how the film performs at the box office or elsewhere. An advance, in theory at least, should be returned to the distributor if it is not earned.

Guarantees or advances are by no means inevitable. A distributor may well say — and frequently does — "I will advance the expenses of distribution including the costs of prints, national advertising, etc., but that is the extent of the cash risk I will take." Obviously, this can mean large sums of money. And if you have faith in your distributor and in his ability to distribute, you may accept this arrangement without a dollar up front.

From net proceeds received from exhibitors and other sources, a distributor will normally insist on a percentage distribution compensation for himself from the first dollar received. Please note that this percentage is levied on what the distributor receives from exhibition — i.e., the distributor's share of proceeds — not on the sum that the exhibitor takes in at the box office (which is known in the trade as exhibitor's gross). These percentage terms vary, but 30 to 35% of net receipts from exhibition in the United States of America; 35 to 40% in Canada and 40 to 50% elsewhere would not be unusual terms. After subtracting distribution fees, there ordinarily follows the recoupment by distributor of the costs advanced by him as set forth in the contract — which may well consist of a long list of items. When these have been recouped under this formula, we have reached the golden dawn of producer's share — i.e., monies due you or your investor. If, however, a guarantee or advance has been proffered this sum will now be deducted from your share until the distributor has recouped it.

For uses other than theatrical, the distribution fee should and does vary. A television network sale could be made by a single telephone call and does not warrant the same type of charge as theatrical distribution with all its costs. Television syndication — or sale station-by-station — is a more arduous business and calls for a higher fee, although still less than theatrical distribution. Similarly, fees should be set depending on circumstances for the new media (pay television, cassettes, recordings and the like). Under normal circumstances distribution fees will vary for these differing efforts.

It is important to know whether you are dealing with a true national distributor or merely a local office that sub-distributes through others in the various territories. If the latter be the case, how are these sub-distributors to be paid? Does the distribution fee cover their compensation or is the distributor entitled to an additional deduction for all of their fees (frequently 25% of distributor's proceeds in the local territory). Obviously the deduction of this large sum is an unfair burden on you, the producer. The bulk or all of sub-distribution costs should come from your distributor's share if he purports to be distributing your film nationally. In any event, the matter must be discussed and determined and not left open for future arguments.

Of course, if the distributor has financed or helped to finance your film the terms of this agreement will be sharply modified in his favor. Under such circumstances, no doubt, he will share in your "producer's share" with no less than a percentage of your profits after all costs are recouped.

The distributor should render regular (usually monthly or quarterly) statements to you in an agreed clarified form so you can understand precisely what has transpired during the reporting period. If there are deductions from your share they should be spelled out in detail and documented. And if money is due and payable, it should accompany the statement.

Beyond that, it is normal for the producer, or his representative, to have the right to audit or inspect the distributor's books with reference to his film and to take extracts from them. A reputable distributor will be quite willing to offer you such an opportunity during regular business hours. Limitations on the number of such inspections during a period or set time limitations after which statements are presumed conclusive are restrictions

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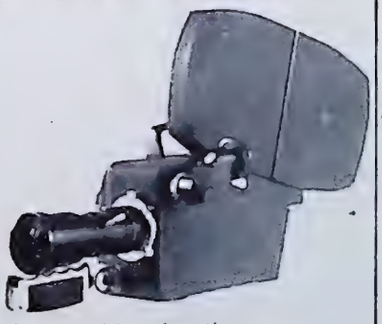

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which should be avoided when possible.

The "delivery" requirements of a distribution agreement are usually spelled out in an exhibit to the contract. This sets forth just what items are to be turned over to the distributor (or more likely to a mutually acceptable film laboratory). The list is frequently long and detailed, including not only duplicating materials for the feature and trailers, but contracts, cue sheets, scripts and dialogue, etc. Essentially, however, the appropriate materials are delivered so that useable release prints may be manufactured therefrom. (It is preferable that the duplicating materials should remain in the producer's name at the laboratory with the distributor's right to draw prints at its own expense set forth in an attached "laboratory letter".)

The date of completed delivery is an essential contractual term. It may be the critical date for establishing the duration of the contract. It may also be the date on which payment of monies are due. If time is expressly of the essence of the agreement and the contract so states, failure to satisfactorily deliver on time is a breach of contract.

On a foreign (or even domestic) film, there may be customs or censorship provisions granting the distributor an option to terminate if the film cannot enter the country or is denied play-dates. These are rarely significant items in today's permissive atmosphere.

Copyright should be in the producer's name. This involves copyright notice on the film with date of publication and a filing thereafter with the federal authorities. The critical factor in copyright is publication (distribution) with notice, and not filing, as the latter can be delayed.

While other attorneys frequently differ, I like an arbitration clause in the distribution agreement which permits the speedy determination of disputes when they arise without formal court proceedings. Under this procedure, ordinarily, a panel of business-oriented men or women promptly hear and decide business issues without concern for legal rules of evidence. The alternative is the normal legal process which may well prove cumbersome. If that is desired however, the law to be followed should be specified — i.e., "This contract shall be construed in accordance with the law of the State of New York." Of course, disputes are best settled by the parties themselves rather than any third party. But sometimes this is impossible.

Every contract should have a notice provision, requiring delivery of notices in person or by registered or certified mail to a set address, with an opportunity to cure alleged breaches of contract during specified periods of time. Oral notice is insufficient and ordinary mail can and does get lost.

A contract should be referred to as an "entire agreement" containing all terms and representations agreed to by the parties. This will help avoid claims of oral or written assurances outside the agreement although it will not bar an outright charge of fraud if that can be proved.

Similarly, any modifications or changes in an agreement should be required to be in writing and signed by both parties. This will eliminate alleged oral agreements reached after the contract has been executed.

The waiver of a contractual right should be specified as non-continuing. To illustrate, this means that if you as a producer have not invariably insisted on the performance of some term of the contract (i.e., prompt payment, statements, etc.), this is not to be construed as a continuous waiver in the future of your rights to the same privilege. Just because you let one thing go, does not mean that you let it go in perpetuity.

There are many other terms that will arise in contractual negotiations for the license of your film, depending on circumstances. There is no single form which covers all eventualities. Beware of "pro forma" prescriptions and legal "boiler plate" language. All deals are different — all situations vary. But all should require a written contract.

Form is not critical. A letter agreement is just as binding as a formally sealed document. An infinite number of "Whereas" clauses is not essential to a valid document. The important thing is to have both parties state their terms —

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Coffee, Brandy & Cigars

To those who still think Alfred Werker's remake, **Hello Sister**, has anything more than a statistical relation to the original **Walking Down Broadway** of von Stroheim, I offer this statement by one of the officers of the old Fox company, for whom Stroheim made his film. After a private screening of the original version he said, "This film is appropriate only for showing to a congress of psychoanalysts — and only to them." (Zasu Pitts' role in it was that of a mortophile lesbian.)

"Hollywood?" said Coco Chanel, the great French fashion designer, "It was the Mont St. Michel of tit and tail... It was like an evening at the Folies Bergères. Once you've said that the girls were beautiful and there were a lot of feathers around, you've said it all... You know perfectly well that everything "super" is the same — "super sets", "super productions", etc.... It had to collapse, sooner or later.... The atmosphere, there?... Infantile... The stars?... Oh, them... I met only one who was worth the bother of going there — Erich von Stroheim — because with him, at least, there was some justification for the extravagance. He was taking a personal revenge. He was a 'Prussian' persecuting Jewish inferiors. Because Hollywood was mostly Jewish. Jews from Central Europe finding an old familiar nightmare in the person of Stroheim. At least with him there wasn't any pretension. He and his victims relived an old story together and they all knew every turn and twist of it by heart and understood it. They were actually rather fond of it."

"Hollywood?" said Katharine Hepburn, "A dream world?" She bristled at the notion. "You mean, did they stay in fairy-tale land till De Sica came along with **Bicycle Thieves**? Not at all! That's bunk! Absolute bunk! Look at **Fury**. I can cite you a million pictures! They worshipped what they considered a kind of beauty and now they worship ugliness and showing people's bottoms!" Launching an attack on **Last Tango in Paris** she said, "I thought it was degenerate, offensive and ridiculous. Self indulgence on the part of Brando. It had nothing to do with love. You can't photograph love, you know. It's invisible, isn't it?"

continued on next page

Michael Mayer is a partner in the New York theatrical law firm of Mayer & Bucher. He has authored numerous articles and books on motion pictures, most recently The Film Industries — Practical Business Legal Problems in Production. Distribution and Exhibition, *published by Hastings House, N.Y.*

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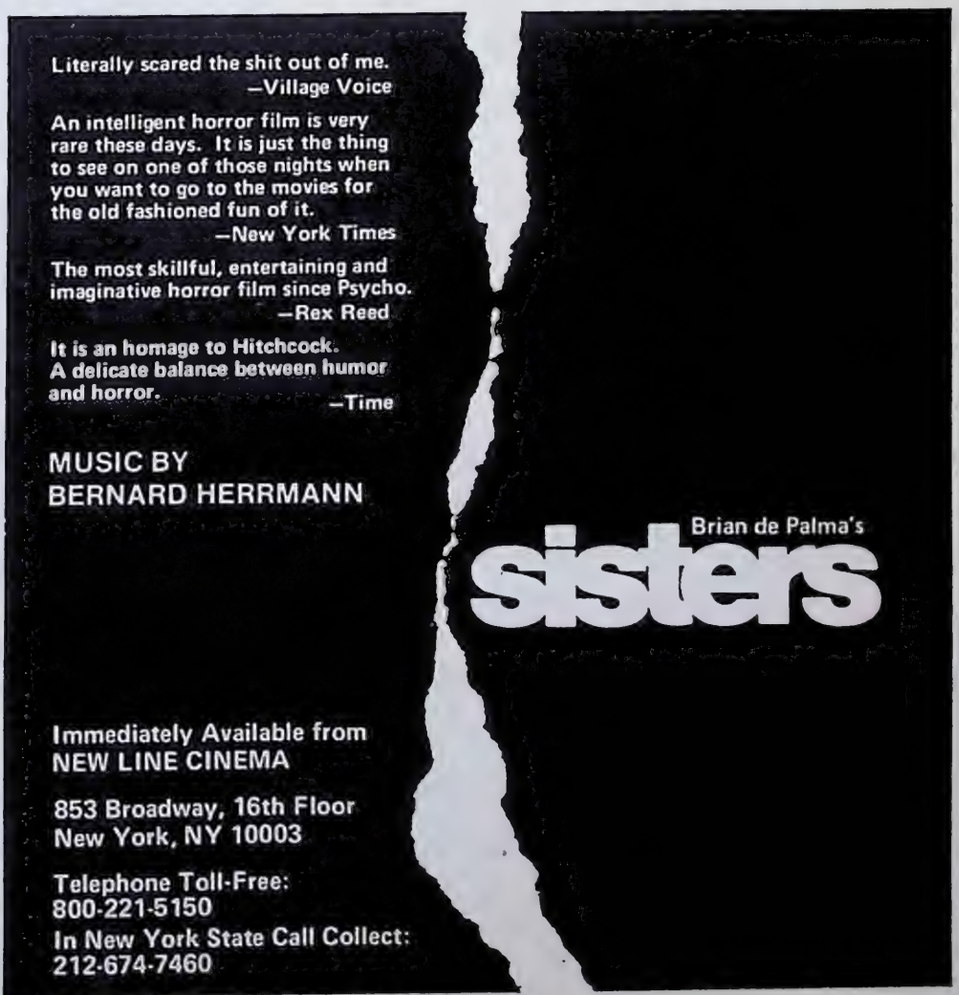
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And apropos the epicene human speech now permitted on the screen, I offer Kafka's "Swearing destroys man's greatest invention — language. It is an insult to the soul and a murderous offense against grace. An offense against language is always an offense against feeling and against the mind, a darkening of the world. Words involve a decision between life and death."

At another time, and in another context, he said, "Girls marching in a revue chorus line are really soldiers in disguise."

Did you know that René Clair once wanted to make a film with the Marx Brothers?

Did you know that Hiroshige and Hokusai, who (with Utamaro) were the greatest of 19th century Japanese artists, both died penniless? Hokusai, towards the end of his life, asked his publisher for money, saying he had not even enough clothes to keep him warm.

There are two kinds of films — those with more than meets the eye and those with less, viz., **Specter of the Rose** vs **The Red Shoes**, or **Where the Lilies Bloom** vs **Barry Lyndon.**

A book I recommend — *Hanging on in Paradise* by Fred Lawrence Guiles, a *billet doux* to the Hollywood that was, "that mythic playground where cinema of both enduring and dubious value was created," told in the persons of its screen writers. What a time it was!

A film book shop I recommend — Wolfgang Gielow Verlag, in Munich, Theatinerstrasse 35, 8 Munich 2, Germany. They do a big business by mail and you would do well to get on their mailing list to receive their lists and catalogues.

I used to have a crush on Jennifer Jones — now it's on Shirley MacLaine, which was reinforced when Shirley, interviewed on her arrival in London, was asked what she thought of the recent revelations about the late President Kennedy's extra-marital *amours* while in office. Her reply (which I would love to spell out for you here if this wasn't a "family publication" and which made headlines in all the London newspapers) consisted of a delicious combination of a pun peppered with both 4 and 5 letter sexual expletives. Figure it out yourself.

The screen's four great can-cans — in the Kotzintsev-Trauberg **The New Babylon**, Geza von Bolvary's **Die Lustigen Weiber von Wien**, Pabst's **L'Atlantide** and, of course, Renoir's **French Can-Can.**

An actor I always liked was Gilbert Roland — because he graced the screen during the romantic era of the "Latin lovers", because his real name was Luis Antonio Damasco de Alonso, because for 40 years he lit up every film lucky enough to have him, because he played the guitar and for his south-of-the-border accent, and because for a spell (and that's the only word for it) he was first the boyfriend, then the husband, of that pretty witch, Constance Bennett.

It is a measure of our time that **Jaws** is the most popular film ever made and that most likely Brecht's marvelous play, **Galileo**, which Ely Landau filmed with Topol, will be among the least popular.

A short film on Puccini by Roger Wyatt and Dejan Georgevich introduces a remarkably pretty singer, Nina Georgevich, with an extraordinary voice. Her rendering of that lovely aria, "Me chiamano Mimi", is the very heart of this wistful little film about a composer who achieved great success but was an unhappy man. One of the epigraphs to my book, *Saint Cinema*, remarks on this in quoting from Henri de Montherlant to wit that "Wagner told Liszt that had he been happy, he would not have set down a note. One puts into one's art what one has been incapable of putting into one's life. It is because He was unhappy that God created the world." Commented Oscar Wilde, "He overreached Himself that time."

Herman G. Weinberg

Born in New York in 1908, Herman G. Weinberg first studied the violin, then arranged music for silent foreign films, and eventually subtitled over 400 French, German, Italian and other films. He began writing about films in 1929 and has contributed articles to most of the world's leading film journals, served on the juries of various film festivals, been U.S. correspondent for Sight & Sound *as well as* Cahiers du Cinéma *and published several books on the cinema, the most recent of which is* The Complete Wedding March *(Little, Brown). Dwight MacDonald has called Herman Weinberg "the Boswell of the movies."*

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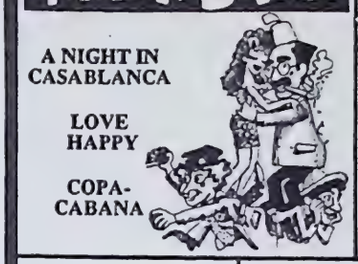

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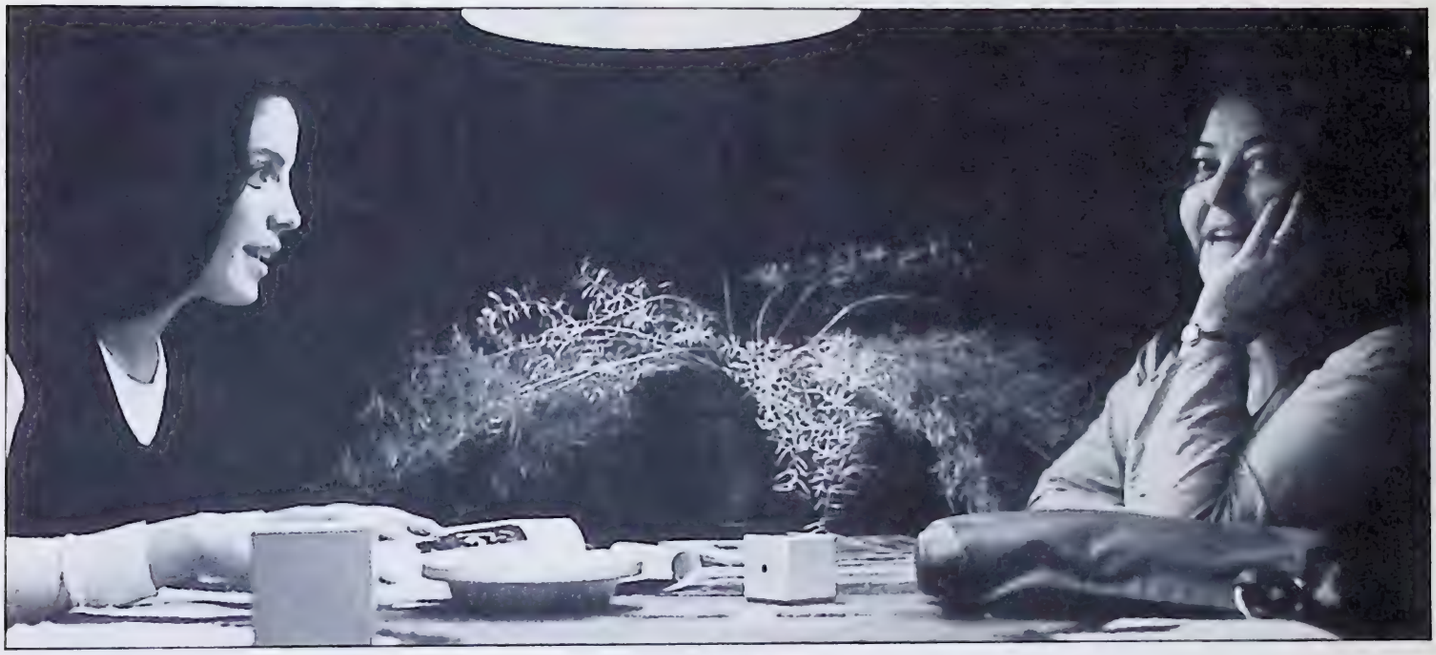

*Star and Director, **The Far Shore**.*

Joyce Wieland's

THE FAR SHORE

Since the shapes of art do not primarily bear witness to the objective nature of the things for which they stand, they can reflect individual interpretation and invention.

— Rudolf Arnheim, Visual Thinking

Establishing new codes

On the surface, **The Far Shore** is a love story. But it is really more than that. It is more like a fable — a fable that comments on the values we are asked to live by and which to a large extent determine our lives.

The film opens with a shot of a clear blue sky. The camera descends down and around over the trees to pick out Marielle, a child sitting in the grass. Birds are singing (of course), and a single violin lends a wistful note of isolation to these opening moments. It is Quebec, 1919. Marielle runs off to rejoin Eulalie, the heroine of this film. Eulalie is walking about the riverbank with the staid Ross Turner, an archetypal Upper Canada type.

Ross is an engineer, a developer — a confident scion of the English Canadian establishment. "The road will cut through here," he says; "and over there, the bridge." He then proposes to Eulalie and she accepts him — absurdly, possibly, in terms of dramatic interaction; but understandably, perhaps, if one knows something about the restricted opportunities at that time for such a woman in Quebec.

After a few shots of the wedding and of champagne and strawberries in Ross's enormous car, they leave the sunny world of rural Quebec for the busy world of urban Toronto. Their journey depicts a movement from light into darkness, from sunshine into rain. Basically, this movement establishes the trajectory for the rest of the film.

Having hoped (one assumes) for some sort of freedom, Eulalie finds herself trapped in the vulgar world of dehumanized business. She has been imported as an exotic decoration with a predetermined role to play. The first scene we see of the proud husband in his office emphasizes this fact. As Ross complacently delivers a pep-talk to his employees, the camera tilts up from the patterns on the carpet to pick out the patterns on Eulalie's dress, before establishing her sitting demurely beside him, her hands folded on her lap, her face appropriately veiled. She is simply part of his display, a decorative endorsement of the authority of his life.

The love story begins when Eulalie meets an artist friend of Ross's, Tom McLeod — a character based in feeling if not in fact on the life of Tom Thomson, one of Canada's most distinguished landscape painters, part of "The Group of Seven." Like Eulalie, Tom has a sensibility at odds with the business values of the world he lives in. The antithesis of a developer, Tom is a conservationist. He falls out with Ross when he refuses to employ his knowledge of the Canadian north to help Ross locate a site for a

Credits

The Far Shore
A New Cinema release. Director: Joyce Wieland. Producer: Judy Steed. Executive Producer: Pierre Lamy. Screenplay: Bryan Barney, from an original script by Wieland. Photography: Richard Leiterman. Music. Doug Pringle. Editors: George Appelby, Brian French, Steed and Wieland. Cast: Céline Lomez, Frank Moore, Lawrence Benedict, Sean McCann. 97 mins.

Hollywood Boulevard
A New World Pictures release. Producer: Jon Davison. Directors: Joe Dante and Allan Arkush. Screenplay: Patrick Hobby. Photography: Jamie Anderson. Music: Andy Stein, Commander Cody and the Lost Planet Airmen. Cast: Candice Rialson, Mary Woronov, Rita George, Jeffrey Kramer, Dick Miller, Paul Bartel, Jonathon Kaplan, Godzilla. 83 mins.

Taxi Driver
A Columbia Pictures release of an Italo-Judeo Production. Director: Martin Scorsese. Producers: Michael Phillips and Julia Phillips. Screenplay: Paul Schrader. Music: Bernard Herrmann. Photography: Michael Chapman. Editors: Marcia Lucas, Tom Rolf, Melvin Shapiro. Art Director: Charles Rosen. Special Make-Up: Dick Smith. Cast: Robert De Niro, Cybill Shepherd, Jodie Foster, Albert Brooks, Harvey Keitel, Leonard Harris, Peter Boyle, Joe Spinell, Richard Higgs, Harry Cohn, Steven Prince, Robert Shields, Martin Scorsese. 112 mins.

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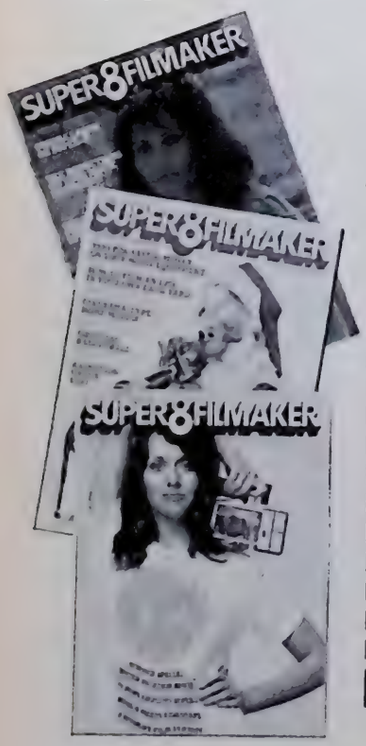

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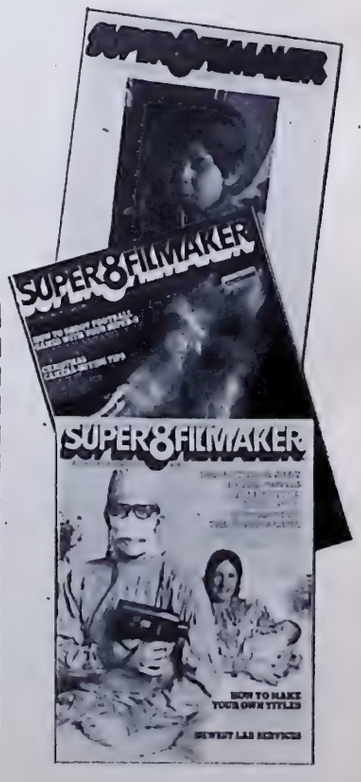

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can movies have brain-washed us into believing that psychological realism and narrative action are the essential stuff of the movies; as we have been conditioned into seeing all men as activators and women as objects — conventionalized creatures off in the corner that the men respond to.

In **The Far Shore**, Joyce Wieland inverts these expectations. The characters are less important as characters than for what they represent; even the lyrical movement of the film seems appropriate for a story based upon the sensibility of a woman who has been reduced to an inconsequence — a mere flower in her husband's lapel!

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In this way, **The Far Shore** joins the great tradition within Canadian film culture (scarcely recognized as such) that records the inability of Canadian society to provide a meaningful existence for its most sensitive inhabitants. It is thus not

ditional Hollywood "B" forms, the Gangster film, the War film and the Science-Fiction and Horror film.

How can all this be done for under $60,000? Simple. Jon Davison, the film's producer, was chiefly responsible for a 6-hour compilation of amazingly entertaining cinematic wreckage which has been touring American college campuses under the title of **The Schlitz Movie Orgy**. His experience with that program, as well as his current position as Publicity Director for New World Pictures, has given him access to scratched and faded concession-stand trailers, Fifties' laxative commercials ("An oral enema, the most important medical development since the Salk vaccine!"), access to stock footage libraries, and to Roger Corman epics like **The Terror, Death Race 2000** and an unidentifiable Phillipino war picture.

To cut all of this together and to film the new framing footage of the story, Davison had only to go to the next office where Joe Dante (long a contributor to Cal Beck's *Castle of Frankenstein* and Forrest Ackerman's *Famous Monsters of Filmland*) and Allan Arkush were cutting trailers for New World releases. Davison says that neither Dante nor Arkush had been on the set of a film in production. "I proposed," he says, "that they at least take the Universal Studio tour, but the price of tickets would have sent us over budget."

Davison also seemed to get his dollar's worth by grabbing everyone who walked through the doors of New World's offices. Dick Miller, star of Corman's **Little Shop of Horrors** and **Bucket of Blood** turns in a virtual reprise of his role in the earlier films as Walter Paisley, a Hollywood agent who, undoubtedly, would be selling refrigerators if he lived anywhere else. And Chas. B Griffith, screenwriter for those two Dick Miller films, as well as **Death Race 2000**, turns up as Mark Dentine, a shelf-worn star of Rock & Roll programmers.

Two of New World's most valuable directors, Jonathon Kaplan **(White Line Fever, Truck Turner)** and Paul Bartel **(Private Parts, Death Race 2000)** have roles, with Bartel portraying director Erich Von Leppe. "The motivation in this scene," says Von Leppe to an actor in a Godzilla suit, "is to step on as many people as possible."

Followers of film publications finally get to see names-in-print. Author and *Variety* reporter Joe McBride is here as a moralistic rapist at a drive-in theatre, and Todd McCarthy (editor of *Kings of the B's*) appears for about 18 frames reading his own book at a penthouse party. Best of all the cameos is the all-too-short stint put in by **Forbidden Planet**'s Robby the Robot, who, apparently, has been sitting in the Old Robot's Home in Pacific Palisades. In his only scene, Robby is auditioned by Dick Miller. "Try reading this line," Miller says, " — 'Frankly Scarlet, I don't give a damn,'." The robot's interpretation may well be the most moving line in the entire film.

Obviously Davison, Arkush and Dante will be heard from again. They have created the ultimate drive-in movie — one that need not sustain levels of attention or, even, pander to the audience's insatiable desire for good, wholesome entertainment. There is enough machine-gun fire, semi-clad female form and, what *Mad* editor Harvey Kurtzman called "eyeball kicks," to last a lifetime. As for the future? The films within **Hollywood Boulevard** may spell it out: **Atomic War Brides, Machete Maidens of Moru, Bad Girls of Boys Town** and **Zombies in the Attic.**

Tim Onosko

Peter Harcourt founded the Film Studies Department at Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario, and is the author of Six European Directors *(Penguin). He is at present a lecturer at York University.*

Martin Scorsese's

TAXI DRIVER

The fever breaks

From the very first image of steam rising out of a Manhattan street, **Taxi Driver** plunges into the head of its psychotic protagonist and remains there for two hours.

Tim Onosko is a contributor to The Velvet Light Trap, *and was published in the now defunct* AFI Report. *His article on Monogram has been widely reprinted.*

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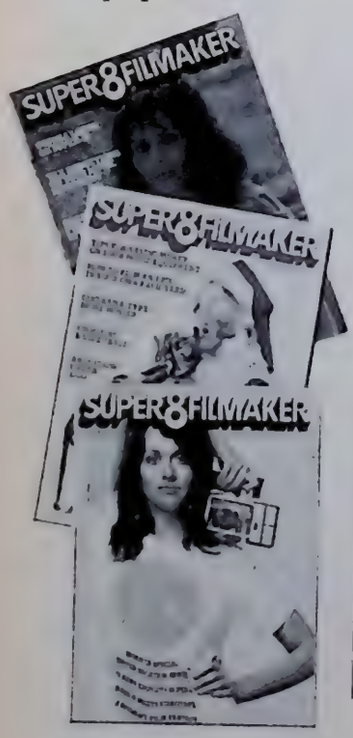

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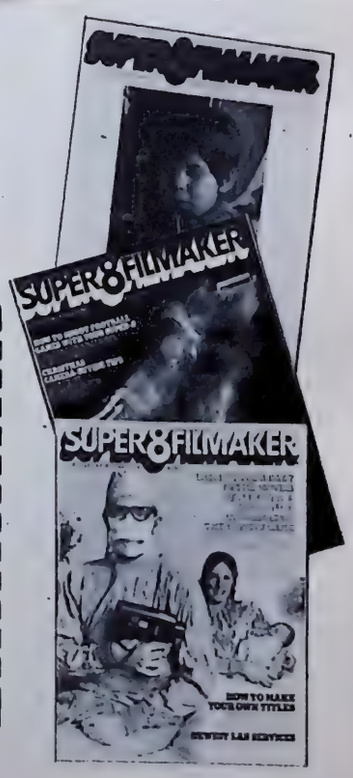

possible silver mine.

It is this falling out that brings Tom and Eulalie together, as Eulalie begins to retreat from the moneyed insensitivity of the home that Ross has given her to the shack in the ravine where Tom likes to live. These scenes are beautifully quiet and private in feeling, offering us the emotional centre of the first part of this film.

But in a feature film, the "plot" must continue. Tom goes north to paint again, while Eulalie remains behind. A surveying expedition to the north with her husband, however, brings the two of them together again; and when a crisis occurs, Eulalie leaves her husband and swims off to be with Tom. While these moments within nature are very beautiful together, they are never free from a sense of threat. The love scenes are all intercut with scenes of Ross and his crude companion, Cluny, searching for them relentlessly.

The ending, of course, is tragic — tragic and perhaps implausible. Yet it is right for the film in terms of fable. **The Far Shore** documents the destruction by the male world of big business of the more feminine world of art, tenderness, nature, and beauty. In this way, to a very real degree, it records the history of our civilization. To make such a statement within the framework of a feature film, certain liberties must be taken, new "codes" established. In **The Far Shore**, some viewers may feel that great liberties have been taken with the narrative plausibility that we expect from cinema. Countless miles of American movies have brain-washed us into believing that psychological realism and narrative action are the essential stuff of the movies; as we have been conditioned into seeing all men as activators and women as objects — conventionalized creatures off in the corner that the men respond to.

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In this way, **The Far Shore** joins the great tradition within Canadian film culture (scarcely recognized as such) that records the inability of Canadian society to provide a meaningful existence for its most sensitive inhabitants. It is thus not only a personal film, a "feminist" film, but a film which has political significance for the whole Canadian nation and, hopefully, for the world at large.

Peter Harcourt

Peter Harcourt founded the Film Studies Department at Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario, and is the author of Six European Directors *(Penguin). He is at present a lecturer at York University.*

Jon Davison's

HOLLYWOOD BOULEVARD

The ultimate drive-in movie

Every so often, a film comes along that prompts a definite reaction, yet cannot be criticized using the normal tenets that a reviewer has in his arsenal. The current New World Pictures release is one of these.

Hollywood Boulevard (formerly **The Actresses** and **The Hollywood Starlets**) may very well be mistaken by general audiences as another R-rated semi-porn pic destined for drive-in and grind houses. Mostly, though, it is the end result of seeing too many movies and then attempting to make one's own — and should be an enjoyable lesson for all aspirants to film production. This is not to say that it is bad. In fact, it is quite good considering it was reportedly made for *under* $60,000. But it is eccentric.

Briefly, it is the loosely constructed story of a series of mishaps (read murders) involving four budding actresses working for a "B" movie studio, Miracle Pictures. (The old joke: "If it's a good picture, it's a Miracle!") The plot is just an excuse to indulge in the ambience of traditional Hollywood "B" forms, the Gangster film, the War film and the Science-Fiction and Horror film.

How can all this be done for under $60,000? Simple. Jon Davison, the film's producer, was chiefly responsible for a 6-hour compilation of amazingly entertaining cinematic wreckage which has been touring American college campuses under the title of **The Schlitz Movie Orgy**. His experience with that program, as well as his current position as Publicity Director for New World Pictures, has given him access to scratched and faded concession-stand trailers, Fifties' laxative commercials ("An oral enema, the most important medical development since the Salk vaccine!"), access to stock footage libraries, and to Roger Corman epics like **The Terror, Death Race 2000** and an unidentifiable Phillipino war picture.

To cut all of this together and to film the new framing footage of the story, Davison had only to go to the next office where Joe Dante (long a contributor to Cal Beck's *Castle of Frankenstein* and Forrest Ackerman's *Famous Monsters of Filmland*) and Allan Arkush were cutting trailers for New World releases. Davison says that neither Dante nor Arkush had been on the set of a film in production. "I proposed," he says, "that they at least take the Universal Studio tour, but the price of tickets would have sent us over budget."

Davison also seemed to get his dollar's worth by grabbing everyone who walked through the doors of New World's offices. Dick Miller, star of Corman's **Little Shop of Horrors** and **Bucket of Blood** turns in a virtual reprise of his role in the earlier films as Walter Paisley, a Hollywood agent who, undoubtedly, would be selling refrigerators if he lived anywhere else. And Chas. B Griffith, screenwriter for those two Dick Miller films, as well as **Death Race 2000**, turns up as Mark Dentine, a shelf-worn star of Rock & Roll programmers.

Two of New World's most valuable directors, Jonathon Kaplan **(White Line Fever, Truck Turner)** and Paul Bartel **(Private Parts, Death Race 2000)** have roles, with Bartel portraying director Erich Von Leppe. "The motivation in this scene," says Von Leppe to an actor in a Godzilla suit, "is to step on as many people as possible."

Followers of film publications finally get to see names-in-print. Author and *Variety* reporter Joe McBride is here as a moralistic rapist at a drive-in theatre, and Todd McCarthy (editor of *Kings of the B's*) appears for about 18 frames reading his own book at a penthouse party. Best of all the cameos is the all-too-short stint put in by **Forbidden Planet**'s Robby the Robot, who, apparently, has been sitting in the Old Robot's Home in Pacific Palisades. In his only scene, Robby is auditioned by Dick Miller. "Try reading this line," Miller says, " — 'Frankly Scarlet, I don't give a damn,'." The robot's interpretation may well be the most moving line in the entire film.

Obviously Davison, Arkush and Dante will be heard from again. They have created the ultimate drive-in movie — one that need not sustain levels of attention or, even, pander to the audience's insatiable desire for good, wholesome entertainment. There is enough machine-gun fire, semi-clad female form and, what *Mad* editor Harvey Kurtzman called "eyeball kicks," to last a lifetime. As for the future? The films within **Hollywood Boulevard** may spell it out: **Atomic War Brides, Machete Maidens of Moru, Bad Girls of Boys Town** and **Zombies in the Attic.**

Tim Onosko

Martin Scorsese's

TAXI DRIVER

The fever breaks

From the very first image of steam rising out of a Manhattan street, **Taxi Driver** plunges into the head of its psychotic protagonist and remains there for two hours.

Tim Onosko is a contributor to The Velvet Light Trap, *and was published in the now defunct* AFI Report. *His article on Monogram has been widely reprinted.*

Martin Scorsese's fifth feature-length film operates on a level of reality that verges on the surreal. The director has structured every scene so that we view New York City through the subjective viewpoint of Travis Bickle (Robert De Niro), the 26-year-old ex-Marine who drives a cab for twelve hours a day, because he has headaches and can't sleep. Looking for a direction that will give meaning to his aimless existence, he arrives at one during the course of the film: the elimination of the "filth and scum" who people the streets of the city.

Taxi Driver is a remarkable achievement, a crazy, excessive, erratic masterpiece, but a masterpiece just the same. Scorsese has always interested me as a director, but he has also always annoyed me with his seeming inability to impose a cohesive structure upon his films. One of his chief weaknesses has been his tendency to play too many scenes at fever pitch. The absence of variation in the tone of **Mean Streets** and particularly **Alice Doesn't Live Here Anymore** irrevocably undercut the genuine climaxes of both films. In **Taxi Driver**, confronted with volatile material which would readily lend itself to a similar treatment, Scorsese has wisely chosen the opposite tactic. He builds the film slowly, quietly, creating a mood of anxiety and imminent violence so that when the explosions finally occur within Travis Bickle's twisted psyche, the effect is all the more harrowing.

A positive side effect of this increased sense of formal structure is the marvelous way Scorsese continually surprises us throughout the film. Just when we feel certain the movie is going to go one way, he pulls the ground from under our feet and aims the material in another direction. For example, the political rally at Columbus Circle is set up in such a way that we expect Travis to release his pent-up violence in the midst of the crowd. In avoiding the overworked cliché of political assassination in a public place, Scorsese and his gifted scenarist Paul Schrader remain totally true to their protagonist's character. It is entirely consistent with everything we have seen of Travis Bickle that he would channel his outrage toward a more specific, personal target, namely the exploiters of the 12½-year-old hooker Iris (Jodie Foster).

Yet another revelatory aspect of **Taxi Driver** is Scorsese's command of diverse cinematic elements to get across the point of a scene. When Travis first approaches Betsy (Cybill Shepherd) in the campaign headquarters, Scorsese cuts back and forth between Travis and Betsy, but within each reverse angle, the camera is slowly moving, so that the entire sequence has the illusion of one continuous tracking shot. The disruptive effect that emerges is the perfect visual correlative for the relationship that will evolve from this meeting. Similarly, the final confrontation between Travis and Iris's pimp (Harvey Keitel) is shot in a one-take medium long shot, giving the violence that ends this scene a direct power highly reminiscent of Samuel Fuller.

With **Taxi Driver**, a thematic consistency becomes clear throughout Scorsese's work. The contradictions in Travis Bickle between a Puritan ethic and the need to find an outlet for his inarticulate rage and repression haunt the Harvey Keitel figure in **Mean Streets** and the headstrong Ellen Burstyn in **Alice Doesn't Live Here Anymore.** The resolution of these contradictions that Travis settles upon gives this film its profoundly disturbing edge. There are all sorts of social and religious implications hovering around the edges of Schrader's script (lots of Bressonian overtones for instance), but the most unnerving one is the realization that there is a bit of Travis Bickle in all of us, a realization that is heightened by the subjective style of the film. This is what ultimately lifts **Taxi Driver** to a scale approaching modern tragedy. The pity and terror with which we view Travis' deterioration and the pathetic irony of his redemption reflect back upon ourselves, haunting the memory long after the last image has faded from the screen.

George Morris

George Morris has reviewed films for The Village Voice, *as well as contributing to* The Boston Real Paper, Changes, *and* Film Comment. *His book,* Errol Flynn, *was published by Pyramid last year.*

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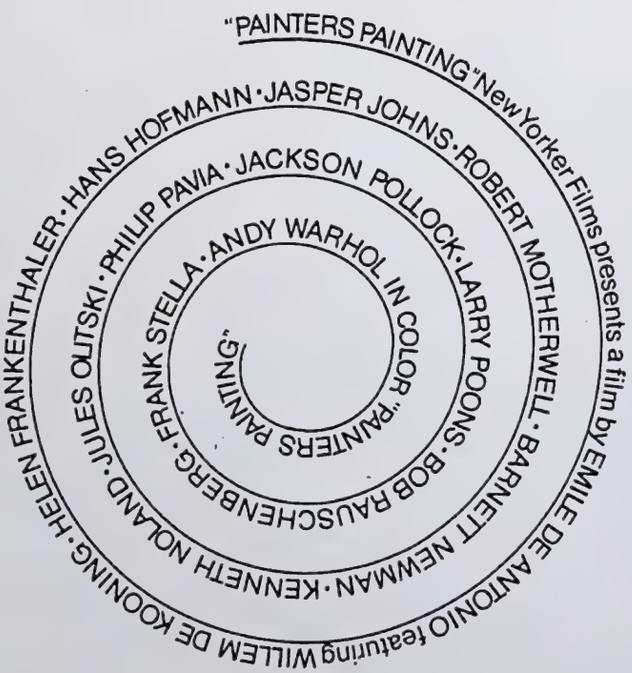
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BOOK NEWS

Three books from unusual sources that you might otherwise miss: (1) The American Film Institute (J.F.K. Center for the Performing Arts, Washington, D.C. 20566) — in association with the Unesco Press in Paris — has published *The Education of the Film Maker: An International View* (paper, 182pp., $6.95), which is a compilation (by Dr. Robert W.Wagner) of a series of papers on film education in a variety of countries (including Yugoslavia, France, the USSR, and India). (2) Marsilio Editori (Venice) has brought out Lino Micciché's comprehensive *Il Cinema Italiano Degli Anni '60,* covering the Italian film industry from 1959 to 1969. Not the least valuable section of the book is its Appendix, which includes a list of films and relevant industry data for each year, plus a comprehensive (73-page) bibliography. The price is 6800 lire and we got our copy from Guaraldi Editore, Via Masaccio 268, 50132 Firenze. (3) And the US National Audiovisual Center (National Archives and Records Service, Washington, D.C. 20409) has published their 1976 *Directory of U.S. Government Audiovisual Personnel* ($3.00; make checks payable to National Archives Trust Fund). The book lists 50 Federal agencies and their personnel involved in radio, television, motion pictures, still photography, sound recordings and exhibits, complete with telephone numbers, mailing addresses.

For only $5 ($7.50 outside the U.S.), aspiring screenwriters can obtain a copy of Stan Blumenthal's 14-page (mimeographed) *How to Write for Television and Motion Pictures*. As a basic introduction, you couldn't do better. Write S.L. Blumenthal, 48466 Jasper Drive, Oakridge, Oregon 94763.

Media & Education is a new 14-times-a-year newsletter for educators, librarians, and community program workers. Subtitled "A Review of Audio-Visual Materials and Approaches", it costs $12 a year and is available from Suite 2, 1505 Decelles, St. Laurent, Quebec, Canada.

Andi and Pam Engel are producing a brand-new film magazine. It's called *Enthusiasm*, looks beautiful, sells for $8.50 for three issues, and is devoted to promoting "those who work today without compromise and who push forward the development of film-making." The first issue, which came out in December of last year, is devoted entirely to the films of Jean-Marie Straub and Danièle Huillet. Write André Engel, 5 Beaufort Gardens, London S.W. 3, England.

Antonin J. Liehm was the leading critic and theoretician of the Czech New Wave of the sixties. He now teaches at Richmond College in New York. His books in English include *The Politics of Culture*, a series of interviews with the Czech and Slovak writers of the liberal-socialist movement; its counterpart, *Closely Watched Films*, interviews with Czechoslovak filmmakers, and *The Milos Forman Story*, a critical biography and book-length interview of the best known contemporary Czech director. This summer, Liehm's newest book (written with his wife Drahomira Liehm) will come out: its subject is the contemporary cinema of the Socialist states. In Canada, all Liehm's books are available from the Sixty Eight Publishers, Box 695, Postal Station "A", Toronto M5W 1G2.

REVIEWS

The Dracula Book, by Donald F. Glut, with introductions by Christopher Lee and William Marshall. Scarecrow. 1975. 388 pp. $15.50.

The Dracula Book chronicles appearances of the vampire character, Dracula, in the mass media (particularly films) through 1974. The beginning of the book surveys historical precursors of Count Dracula, early vampire lore, and dramatic and literary works featuring Dracula. The body of the book synopsizes and discusses motion pictures about Dracula, based on Dracula, or in which Dracula appears. The conclusion of the book briefly notes appearances by Dracula on radio and TV, in recent books, adaptations and comics, on records, in advertising, and on commercial paraphernalia such as sweat shirts and popcorn boxes.

As a reference tool, which it purports to be, ***The Dracula Book*** is limited. There is no bibliography. The index is adequate only for users who already know what item they want to research. For example, specific film titles appear in the index, but nowhere is there a chronological or alphabetical list of Dracula films covered in the book. ***The Dracula Book***, which gives film plots but does not give production credits, would best serve the reference function if used in conjunction with Walt Lee's ***Reference Guide to Fantastic Films*** (3 vols., Los Angeles: Chelsea-Lee Books) which gives complete credits, including original titles, countries of production, related films and sequels, but does not cover plot.

For buffs and TV freaks, okay. For film scholars, not much use.

Linda S. Batty

The Films of Howard Hawks, by Donald C. Willis. Scarecrow. 1975. 243 pp. $8.50.

When William Faulkner began writing for Howard Hawks, the seasoned director cautioned the neophite screenwriter not to worry about the logic of the plot: "Just write good scenes." In a transcribed tape interview which forms an appendix to the present book, the director is again quoted as saying to John Wayne on location for **Red River**, "You do three good scenes and don't annoy the audience the rest of the time and you'll be a big star." For Howard Hawks somehow it has always been the scenes that have been important. Few of his films stand up all the way through, but there is scarcely one that doesn't have a few scenes which redeem the rest. That view is shared by Donald C. Willis, who sees Hawks as a "superb director of actors usually working with pulp subjects." That's almost a definition of the auteurist credo, and while one might argue that directors like Samuel Fuller and Gerd Oswald, both beloved of the *Cahiers du Cinéma* crew, are more typical auteurist choices, they are never as good with actors as Hawks is at his most pedestrian.

Certainly there never was an American director taken up by the auteurists as Howard Hawks has been. In fact, as Willis points out, quoting Stuart Byron's citation of Joseph McBride: "A critic could always get a laugh by defining these strange people [i.e. auteurists] as the people who liked Howard Hawks."

Willis admits disarmingly in his introduction that Hawks has always been his favorite American film director. He admits

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Linda S. Batty is author of Retrospective Index to Film Periodicals 1930-1971 *and annual bibliographer of* Film Comment.

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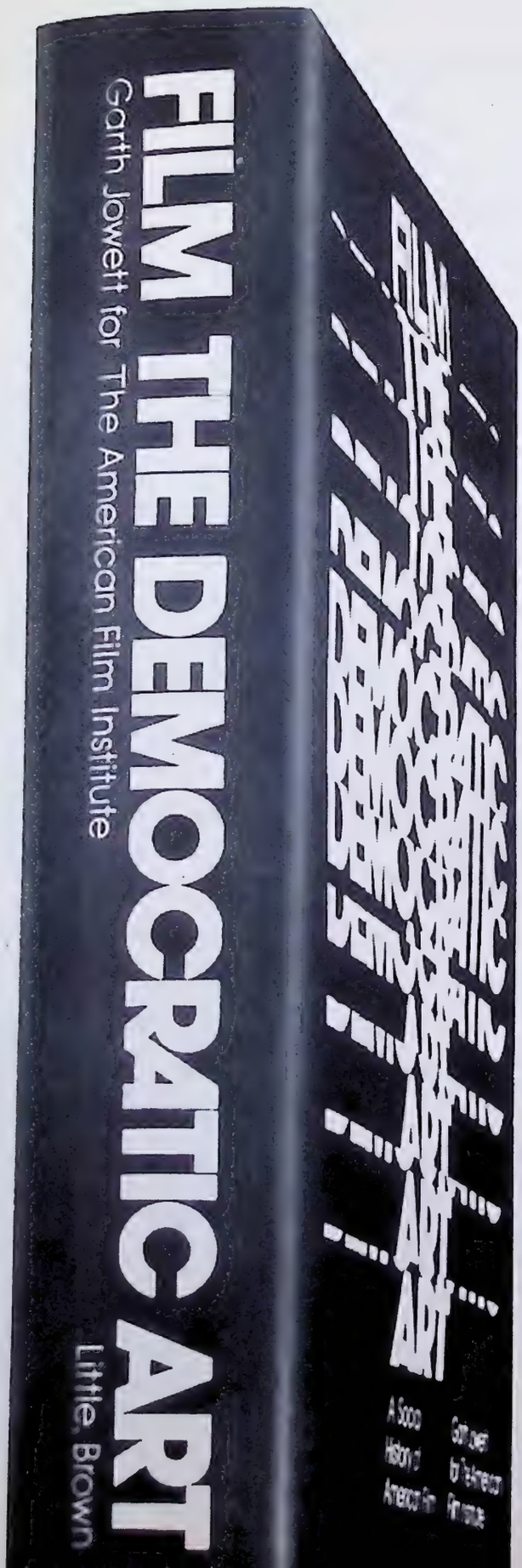

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LITTLE, BROWN

further that he acquired this admiration from Peter Bogdanovich who, as everybody now knows, sat at the feet of the master before trying his own hand. Bogdanovich taught Willis at UCLA. In his book he puts all of the films he's seen, and he has seen most of them, under rather arbitrary subject headings. For instance, might it not have been more interesting to see **The Dawn Patrol** treated with **Only Angels Have Wings**, rather than with other war dramas. He also includes **To Have and Have Not** as a war drama, making him the first critic ever to take the Vichy villains seriously. In his treatment of **His Girl Friday**, he says that this romantic version is an improvement on the Hecht-MacArthur play "The Front Page." He calls **Only Angels Have Wings** the best B Picture ever made, but gives hardly passing marks to **Sergeant York**.

At its worst, ***The Films of Howard Hawks*** reads like a Cary Grant fan magazine; at its best it brings together the best of what the auteurists have said about Hawks. Perhaps the best thing in the book is the transcribed interview mentioned earlier. There are good notes and an index, which are indispensable in a book of this kind.

Howard Engel

Lorentz on Film, Movies 1927 to 1941, by Pare Lorentz. Hopkinson and Blake 1975. 228 pp. $8.95 cloth, $5.50 paper.

Pare Lorentz's career as a movie critic has been generally ignored or underrated, dwarfed as it has been by his awesome place in film history as "father of the American documentary." This collection of ninety-nine reviews and articles from *Judge, Vanity Fair* and *McCall's* places him on equally high ground as an observer and interpreter of the formative years of sound, from Murnau's essentially silent **Sunrise** (whose synchronized musical accompaniment made it "an audible and visual symphony," Lorentz wrote) to Welles' talky **Citizen Kane** (with its overlapping dialogue and other radio techniques transferred to film "in masterful fashion").

The book is worth reading on several levels — for fun, for background into Lorentz's own film career, and for one man's insights into the nature of the medium itself. As a spectator's guide to the nostalgia-laden movies of the time — **Love Me Tonight, Front Page, The Private Life of Henry the Eighth** — Lorentz's straightforward comments stand up as mannerly or hard-hitting or spirited as the films themselves. After admitting that he went to see **Public Enemy** thinking he already had had his fill of machine guns and squad cars, he stated flatly, "I was wrong." Madeleine Carroll and Godfrey Tearle, in **The Thirty-Nine Steps,** gave Robert Donat "more support than he needs," and the film version of Eugene O'Neill's **Strange Interlude,** starring Norma Shearer and Clark Gable, turned out "better than it has any right to be." His joy in finding excellence, or even good, in unsuspected places, is as infectious as James Agee's was a decade later, with similar turns of phrase.

At the same time, Lorentz ably pinpointed those rare and often invisible qualities that can combine to raise the few wonderful movies over the many ordinary ones. "Forget the much-publicized Miss Dietrich," he wrote in his review of Sternberg's **Dishonored,** "and watch the unusual lights and sets with which she is photographed." In reviewing Al Jolson's **Singing Fool,** Lorentz concluded that the real future of the talking picture may be "blank verse written in time to orchestration."

But most of all Lorentz longed for real places in movies, and real (or real-looking) people. "Our best productions," he lamented, "are obvious and theatrical." Hollywood had never heard of Mexico or Holland, he complained in his reviews of Eisenstein's **Thunder Over Mexico** and of Korda's **Rembrandt**; but it was the American landscape Lorentz was most eager to see filmed. He hoped for an American equivalent of René Clair's **A Nous la liberté,** located in the great factories of Pittsburgh, Detroit, or Gary. He regretted that John Ford, who had made **Stagecoach** "a thing of beauty" by filming it in Utah's Zion Park, did not begin **The Grapes of Wrath** with real scenes of the American Dust Bowl.

The Dust Bowl had been the subject of Pare Lorentz's first documentary film, **The Plow That Broke the Plains,** in 1936, which an indulgent editor at *McCall's* allowed Lorentz to review. He summed it up as "an unusual motion picture which might have been a really great one had the story and construction [his own, of course] been up to the rest of the workmanship," (camera work by Ralph Steiner and Paul Strand, music by Virgil Thomson). Certainly his next film was a really great one — **The River** — possibly the most widely seen and highly praised of American documentaries, although it was also attacked as political propaganda.

Few epithets could have depressed Lorentz more. Just to write the word documentary gave him a headache, he once complained, and propaganda of any kind he found dull, mainly for being humorless and without form. Most of the important documentaries of the time had failed, Lorentz felt, because the "courageous independents" who made them simply didn't work hard enough at pulling the elements together. A good cause and a good film were not necessarily the same, a point which might well be taken up in film criticism today.

Lorentz on Film takes up other issues that are still pertinent, stumping idealistically against censorship, for better short films, and against and for all that Hollywood was then. It is everyone's loss that Hollywood had no place for Pare Lorentz, who was, as he wrote of Murnau, "one of the men who has grasped the great possibilities of his craft." Grasped, in word and in deed.

Cecile Starr

Cagney By Cagney, by James Cagney. Doubleday. 1976. 202 pp. $8.95 (Canada: $9.95)

The nature of Cagney's long impending autobiography has been the subject of speculation and rumour. The guesses were heavily tinted by the reputation Cagney has acquired since his retirement — a reputation bolstered greatly by the AFI special award ceremony in 1974. That is to say, we have been told by his peers and contemporaries that Cagney is the nicest and gentlest of men who paints and — would you believe it? — writes poetry. But those who were expecting that rare thing, an intelligent memoir by an actor, will be disappointed. There is little here of the frenetic brilliance that informed the autobiographies of Sterling Hayden and Errol Flynn. There is instead the usual copyrighting of anecdotes, many of them already familiar from the three biographies of Cagney undertaken so far.

The story is a tired one. Cagney, the New York street tough, makes his entry into show business through dancing to the stage. He even does some work in the Yiddish theatre. When he gets the Hollywood nod and is typecast a heavy, he fulfills the roles demanded of him by impersonating the yeggs, puguglies and smalltime hooligans he hung about with in his youth. Thus does he lend a note of authenticity and legitimate (if dated) street savvy to his one basic characterization. Cagney wastes no opportunity, however, to remind us that he believes himself a hoofer first and foremost. He writes not once but many times that his own favourite role is George M. Cohan in **Yankee Doodle Dandy**. It's sad that he still thinks what he most enjoyed is perforce what is most important and memorable in his career.

This is a movie star memoir in the great tradition: Cagney spends a lot of space passing out tributes to his less talented buddies in the florid Hollywood manner. Not once, though, does he give anything like a good portrait of any of them, or indeed of anyone, including himself. But at least if he has harsh words for the old Hollywood experience he is not bitter about it. Old age has mellowed him and made him cautious. He deals frankly with his own production company (see *Take One*, volume four, number five) while trying to play down any avaricious motives that may have attached to its founding.

continued on page 73

Howard Engel is a freelance writer and critic in Toronto and producer of CBC Radio Arts in Review.

Cecile Starr has written for The Saturday Review, *taught film at Columbia and the New School and is currently completing a book.*

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Unfortunately, there is relatively little about his days in the Warner Brothers stock company. He does, however, point out the way Warners jumped on any recently profitable idea and reworked it, often in as few as 10 shooting days. He relates that when Milestone's version of **The Front Page** was still big b.o., Warners not only got into newspaper comedies but used the same plot in a jungle picture in which Cagney had the misfortune to feature. He can't or won't recall the title. He refers to it only as *Hildy Johnson Among the Bananas*. It's that type of small anecdote that means that, at the very least, the effect of ***Cagney By Cagney*** will be to make future books by other hands more readable than the ones we've seen to date.

Doug Fetherling

BOOKS ON FILM: A CHECKLIST

This column lists new books, whether hardcover (H) or paperback (P), dealing in whole or in part with the motion picture and issued, for the most part, in the English language by North American publishers; also new editions of out-of-print titles, and novels the significance of which transcends their fictional format. Canadian agents and prices (where differing from U.S. publisher and price) are noted in brackets as much as possible (in some cases, Canadian agencies don't find out until the very last minute whether or not they'll be importing a book, or at what price). All mass market paperbacks are the same price in both countries; some titles have no Canadian distribution.

American Fashion. Edited by Sarah Tomerlin. Quadrangle 1975. 520 pp. $35 (H). (Fitzhenry & Whiteside, $29.50). Chapter on American fashion design in movies.

Animation. By Preston Blair. Foster Art Service 1975. 40 pp. $2 (P). For students of animation.

Ted Avery: King of Cartoons. By Joe Adamson. Popular Library 1975. 238 pp. $3.95 (P). About creator of Bugs Bunny, Porky Pig, etc.

Awards, Honors and Prizes: Vol. Two, International and Foreign. Edited by Paul Wasserman. Gale Research 1975. 461 pp. $48 (H). Includes motion picture trophies.

A Biographical Dictionary of Film. By David Thomson. Morrow 1975. 638 pp. $16.95 (H). Career sketches and essays on 800 directors, producers and performers.

Charles Bronson Superstar. By Steven Whitney. Dell 1975. 284 pp. $1.50 (P).

Bruce Lee Lives? By Max Caulfield. Dell 1975. 170 pp. $1.50 (P). A novelized speculation about the kung fu star.

Cagney: The Actor As Auteur. By Patrick McGilligan. Barnes 1975. 240 pp. $12 (H). (Smithers & Bonellie, $11.25).

Johnny Carson. By Douglas Lorence. Drake 1975. 193 pp. $9.95 (H). (General, $11.50).

Crazy Salad. By Nora Ephron. Knopf 1975. 201 pp. $7.95 (H). (Random House, $9.25). Collected articles about women, some in film.

Doris Day: Her Own Story. By A.E. Hotchner. Morrow 1975. 313 pp. $8.95 (H). (McLeod, $10.95).

Dear Boris. By Cynthia Lindsay. Knopf 1975. 274 pp. $12.50 (H). (Random House, $14.50). Boris Karloff biography.

The Debonairs. By James Robert Parish and Don E. Stanke. Arlington 1975. 511 pp. $25 (H). Careers of eight "debonair" actors.

Don't Get Me Wrong — I Love Hollywood. By Sidney Skolsky. Putnam 1975. 258 pp. $8.95 (H). (Longman, $10.50). The columnist's memoirs.

Educational Media Yearbook 1975-76. Edited by James W. Brown. Bowker 1975. 559 pp. $21.95 (H). Survey of the field with audiovisual reference and information directory.

Elvis and the Colonel. By May Mann. Drake 1975. 273 pp. $9.95 (H). (General, $11.50). Intimate notes about the singer and his manager, Col. Tom Parker.

The Elvis Presley Scrapbook. By James Robert Parish. Ballantine 1975. 185 pp. $6.95 (P). Stills and other memorabilia.

The Filmgoer's Companion. By Leslie Halliwell. Avon 1975. 890 pp. $6.95 (P). Paperback of revised fourth edition.

Film Is. By Stephen Dwoskin. Overlook 1975. 268 pp. $15 (H). (Macmillan, $18). Broad and informative survey of underground film.

Errol Flynn. By George Morris. Pyramid 1975. 160 pp. $1.75 (P).

Henry Fonda. By Michael Kerbel. Pyramid 1975. 160 pp. $1.75 (P).

The Golden Age of the Movie Palace. By Ben M. Hall. Potter (distributed by Crown) 1975. 262 pp. $4.95 (H). (General, $5.75). Reprint of 1961 book *The Best Remaining Seats,* a survey of cinematic cathedrals.

I Am Not Spock. By Leonard Nimoy. Celestial Arts (231 Adrian Rd., Millbrae, CA 94030) 1975. 135 pp. $4.95 (P). The actor from *Star Trek* reflects on himself, his role and the TV series.

I Know It When I See It. By Michael Leach. Westminster Press 1975. 153 pp. $5.95 (H). (McGraw-Hill/Ryerson, $6.75). Study of pornography and violence in film.

Buster Keaton's 'The General'. Edited by Richard J. Anobile. Avon 1975. 256 pp. $5.95 (P). Screenplay with full dialogue and sequential frame blow-ups.

Knowing the Score. By Erwin Bazelon. Van Nostrand Reinhold 1975. 352 pp. $12.50 (H). Film-scoring techniques and

Doug Fetherling is a Toronto writer and critic, and is Take One*'s new book editor.*

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Lemmon. By Don Widener. Macmillan 1975. 347 pp. $9.95 (H). (Collier-Macmillan, $9.95). Jack Lemmon's life and career.

Living in Fear. By Les Daniels. Scribners 1975. 248 pp. $12.95 (H). (John Wiley, $14.95). History of horror in mass media.

Make It Again, Sam. By Michael B. Bruxman. Barnes 1975. 285 pp. $15 (H). (Smithers & Bonellie, $20). Survey of movie remakes.

Rouben Mamoulian's 'Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde'. Edited by Richard J. Anobile. Avon 1975. 256 pp. $5.95 (P). Screenplay with full dialogue and sequential frame blow-ups.

The Marx Brothers. By William Wolf. Pyramid 1975. 160 pp. $1.75 (P).

The Mickey Mouse Club Scrapbook. Edited by Keith Jeller. Grosset & Dunlap 1975. 143 pp. $3.95 (P). (McLeod, $3.95). Trivia and memorabilia.

The Mini-Documentary: Serializing TV News. By Stanley Field. TABooks 1975. 249 pp. $12.95 (H). How to shoot TV news on film and tape.

Muybridge: Man In Motion. By Robert Bartlett Hass. University of California Press 1975. 219 pp. $18.50 (H). Biography of "godfather of moving pictures."

Nazi Cinema. By Erwin Leiser. Macmillan 1975. 179 pp. $7.95 (H), $4.95 (P).

Off Camera. By Leonard Probst. Stein & Day 1975. 269 pp. $10 (H). (McGraw-Hill/Ryerson, $11.50). Interviews with screen and stage performers.

Principles of Visual Anthropology. Edited by Paul Hookings. Aldine-Atherton 1975. 521 pp. $24.50 (H). Contains section on use of film in anthropology.

The Real James Dean. By John Gilmore. Pyramid 1975. 160 pp. $1.50 (P). According to blurb, "a lover of men as well as women."

Robert Redford: The Superstar Nobody Knows. By David Hanna. Leisure Books 1975. 187 pp. $1.50 (P).

Rosalind Russel. By Nicholas Yanni. Pyramid 1975. 160 pp. $1.75 (P).

The Seal of Dracula. By Barrie Pattison. Crown 1975. 136 pp. $2.95 (P). Survey of vampire films. Also Futura paperback in UK.

The Search for Sam Goldwyn. By Carol Eastman. Morrow 1975. 304 pp. $8.95 (H). (McLeod, $9.95). A biography.

The Sex People. By Drs. Phyllis and Eberhard Kronhausen. Playboy Press 1975. 265 pp. $8.95 (H). (Musson, $10). About performers and others in erotic films.

The Silent Clowns. By Walter Kerr. Knopf 1975. 373 pp. $17.95 (H). (Random House. $21). A look at Chaplin, Keaton, Lloyd, Max Linder et al.

16mm Film Cutting. By John Burder. Hastings House 1975. 158 pp. $7.95 (P). (Saunders of Toronto).

The Small TV Studio. By Alan Beringham et al. Hastings House 1975. 163 pp. $7.95 (P). (Saunders of Toronto, $7.50).

A Standard Glossary for Film Criticism. By James Monaco. New York Zoetrope (31 E. 12th St., NYC 10003) 1975. 32 pp. $2.50 (P). An essential guide to 260 basic terms for people who talk and write about movies.

Streisand. By Jonathan Black. Leisure Books 1975. 187 pp. $1.50 (P).

The Super 8 Book. By Lenny Lipton. Straight Arrow 1975. 320 pp. $1.50 (P). (Musson, $7.95). Basic techniques and equipment.

The Vampire Film. By James Ursini and Alain Silver. Barnes 1975. 238 pp. $10 (H). (Smithers & Bonellie, $12.50).

Mae West. By Michael Bavar. Pyramid 1975. 160 pp. $1.75 (P).

What I Want to Be When I Grow Up. By Carol Burnett. Simon & Shuster 1975. Unpaginated. $5.95 (H). (Musson, $6.95). Humorous stills featuring the comedienne.

The Whole Sex Catalogue. Edited by Bernhardt J. Hurwood. Pinnacle. 319 pp. $6.95 (P). Chapter on sex in movies.

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George L. George, for many years a film director, with an Academy Award for one of his documentaries, is a book reviewer for several film magazines, and — in the days of WWII — was Production Manager at the National Film Board until he reorganized production and abolished his function. He then became a director for the World in Action unit.

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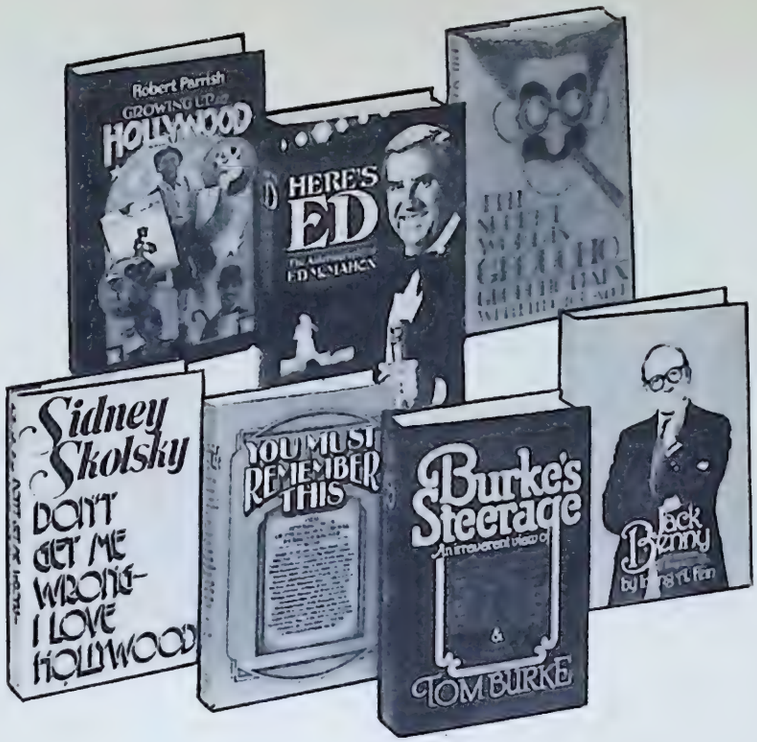

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INFO

NEXT ISSUE

In the August issue of *Take One* (published July 5), you'll hear Russ Meyer (who gave the world *The Immoral Mr. Teas*, *Beyond the Valley of the Dolls*, and *Supervixens*) expound on his life and his attitude to films and filmmaking:

"I love to put sex in outrageous locations. Up a tree, in a canoe, behind a waterfall..."

Then, in a more serious vein, you'll hear Milos Forman (who gave the world *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*) discuss the behind-the-scenes of his Academy Award-winner:

"To be absolutely honest, I could never understand why the producers were such fools as to want to make this film. It pleased me enormously, I very much wanted to make it, but why they saw there a commercial possibility remained a mystery to me. Naturally, I didn't say that to them."

Plus, there'll be a careful analysis of a much-neglected cinematic masterpiece, Alexander Dovzhenko's *Zvenigora*, and a look at the work of the Hollywood brothers that design movie ad campaigns that are nice to look at and actually sell admission tickets.

SuperMeyer and his Supervixens

F.P.S. ARCHIVES

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BOOKER'S GUIDE TO SOURCES OF 16MM FILMS MENTIONED IN THIS ISSUE

Hitchcock: For the sake of convenience and space, we refer readers to the advertisements in this issue. Most of the major distributors that handle Hitchcock films — and are taking them seriously — have bought space in this special issue.

Alice Doesn't Live Here Anymore. WB.
Barry Lyndon. WB*
Death Race 2000. CAN:IFD. US:NWP.
The Far Shore. NCE.
Forbidden Planet. CAN:BEL. US:FI.
French Can-Can: CAN:FEM. US:MAB.
Fury. FI.
Gay Purr-ee. WB.
Hello Sister. CAN:ITE. US:FI.
Hollywood Boulevard. CAN:IFD. US:NWP.
Mean Streets. WB.
The Phantom Tollbooth. CAN:BEL.
The Plow That Broke the Plains. US:MAB, PYR.
Red River. UA.
The Red Shoes. CAN:AST. US:TWY.
The River. US:MAB.
Specter of the Rose. US:IVY.
Taxi Driver. CAN:AST*. US:SWK*
Where the Lilies Bloom. UA.
Yankee Doodle Dandy. UA, MAB.

Addition
Eadweard Muybridge, Zoopraxographer (Vol. 5 No. 1): US:NYF.

*16mm prints may not be currently available. While based on sources we believe reliable and up-to-date, *Take One* cannot guarantee the accuracy of any of the above information, nor assume any liability for the results of any mis-information given. We will be happy to print additions and corrections in future issues.

AST. Astral Films, 224 Davenport Rd., Toronto M5R 1J7
BEL. BelleVue Film Distributors, 227 Victoria Street, Toronto M5B 1B6.
FEM. Film Library of the French Embassy, 464 Wilbrod Street, Ottawa.
FI. Films Inc., 1144 Wilmette Ave., Wilmette, Ill. 60091.
IFD. International Film Distributors, 175 Bloor East, Toronto
ITE. International Tele-Film, 47 Densley Ave., Toronto M6M 2P5.
IVY. Ivy Films, 165 W. 46th St., NYC 10022.
MAB. MacMillan Audio Brandon, 34 MacQuesten Parkway S., Mount Vernon, N.Y. 10550.
NCE. New Cinema Enterprises, 35 Britain St., Toronto M5A 1R7.
NWP. New World Pictures, 8831 Sunset Blvd., Los Angeles, Cal. 90069.
NYF. New Yorker Films, 43 West 61st St., NYC 10023.
PYR. Pyramid Films, Box 1048, Santa Monica, Cal. 90406.
SWK. Swank Motion Pictures, 201 South Jefferson Ave., St. Louis, Mo. 63166.
TWY. Twyman Films, 329 Salem Ave., Dayton, Ohio 45401.
UA. United Artists Corp., Suite 800, 2180 Yonge St., Toronto M4S 2B9 and 729 7th Ave., NYC 10019.
WB. Warner Brothers Distributors, 70 Carlton St., Toronto M5B 1L7 and 400 Warner Blvd., Burbank, Cal. 91505.

SIXTEEN MILLIMETRE NEWS

The most complete Sci-Fi film collection to date belongs to Films Inc. Titles like **Fantastic Planet, Phase IV, Last Days of Man on Earth, Chariots of the Gods?,** are only about 1/10 of the films of this genre which are featured on the latest Films Inc. poster. Designed by the top Japanese commercial designer and illustrator, Tadanori Yokoo and Haruo Takino, the "anthological" sci-fi poster is yours if you write your request and return address to: Films Inc., 1144 Wilmette Ave., Wilmette IL 60091.

Philip Thompson Productions (1321 Princeton, Santa Monica, Ca. 90404) announces the availability of three films which have been selected for showing at numerous festivals around the world. **Tolmers — beginning or end?,** the story of a London community's fight against rampant property speculation, **L.S. Lowry the Industrial Artist,** and **A Place Called Ardoyne,** about the effects of the Irish conflict on a small Catholic community in Belfast, have been shown on BBC-TV as well as television stations in North America and Europe.

An R-rated version of **Flesh Gordon,** a sexual parody of 30s sci-fi serials, is now available exclusively from Ivy Film, 165 West 46th St., New York, N.Y. 10036. Prints are in both 16 and 35mm.

Universal/16 (445 Park Avenue, N.Y.C. 10022, and see their ad in this issue for addresses of local distributors) now offers their customers who rent **Psycho** the use (at no extra charge) of a special 6½ minute trailer prepared when the film was originally released in which Alfred Hitchcock takes the audience on a tour of the Bates' mansion and motel. Universal is also pulling all of its present prints of **Marnie** and making brand-new, uncensored and unedited 16mm copies.

CONFERENCES & COMPETITIONS

The **Sixth Annual Marin County Fair Film Competition,** which awards cash prizes totaling over $2,500 in independent, student and animated film categories, takes place this year from July 1 to 5. 16mm films up to 45 minutes long, completed after January 1, 1973, and made by students and independent filmmakers who are residents of the USA, are eligible. Contact Marin County Fair, Marin Center Fairgrounds, San Rafael, California 94903, (415) 472-2406, for entry forms and further information.

The **4th Annual Northwest Film and Video Festival** will be held August 13-15 and 20-22 in Portland, Oregon. Video artists living in Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Montana, British Columbia, and Alaska are invited to submit a maximum of two works of any length in 16mm, S8mm or 8mm film, or in 1/2 or 3/4 inch videotape, produced since September 1, 1975. Cash and lab processing awards will be given. Deadline for entries is July 30. For information and forms, write Northwest Film and Video Festival, Northwest Film Study Center, Portland Art Museum, S.W. Park and Madison, Portland, Oregon 97205.

The British Film Institute's annual summer school, aimed primarily at film teachers and students, will be held at the University of Stirling, Scotland, 31 July - 14 Aug., under the title **Film, Image and Analysis.** Course fee (includes all room, board, tuition) is approximately $140.00. Details: Summer School Secretary, BFI/EAS, 81 Dean Street, London W1V 6AA, Great Britain.

Caracas, Venezuela will host a **Super 8 Avant Garde International Film Festival,** Aug. 1-6. Entry date is June 15. Cash prizes, equipment prizes and gold plaque prizes will be presented. For information and entry form, write Julio Neri, Latin Touch, Av. Rio de Janeiro, Ed. Lorenal-B, Atp. 52-Chuao, Caracas, Venezuela.

An international competitive festival of animated films will be held Aug. 10-15 at the National Arts Centre in Ottawa. **Ottawa 76** will bring to North American audiences and filmmakers the single most important annual event in international animation, under the sanction of ASIFA and FIAPF. For full information concerning entry, categories, awards and accomodations in Ottawa, write Ottawa 76, 75 Albert St., Suite 1105, Ottawa, Canada K1P 5E7.

The Second **International Festival of Women's Films** will take place in New York City, Sept. 13-26. In addition to featuring films by women, the Festival will sponsor a major four-day Women's Film Conference. Papers will be presented and several workshops are planned. Write Jan Rosenberg, 36 West 62nd St., New York City 10023 for further information.

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Mai Zetterling
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